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WHY NOT TO-DAY?

BY L. C.

I have questioned my hopes of the future,
I have doubted my dreams of the past;
I have roamed through the realms of ambition,
With visions too lovely to last;
I have longed for youth's fondest ideals,
But those phantoms are now far away,
And at last fair Philosophy whispers:
"Oh, why not be happy to-day?"

Though storm clouds may darken life's valley,
And each heart have some shadows of care,
The bright sun will soon glid the heavens,
And your troubles will melt into air;
So what is the use of repining,
Will it bless or ennoble you, pray?
No! the world does not care for your whining
So why not be happy to-day?

Ah, the old world at heart is too solemn,
And life is at best full of trials.
But try to be cheerful; 'twill help you
If you brighten all pathways with smiles.
Then life will be well worth the living—
Let kindness illumine its way,
And with hope's gilded banners before us
Let's strive to be happy to-day.

WHO SHALL JUDGE

BY K. F. H.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.]

In an instant everything was clear to me. This was the secret that noble girl had guarded so jealously; this was what she was expecting as she stood at the gate; this was what she had determined to hide from me at any cost. I took the unfortunate boy by the arm:

"Come home with me," I said sternly; "you have no business here."

My voice seemed to penetrate his muddled brains, for he offered no resistance and let me lead him back.

The dark figure was at the gate again as we neared it. Poor girl, how often she must have kept such miserable vigils.

"I have brought your brother home," I said to her.

She went into the house before us without a word. Bernard was nearly helpless by that time. I half-dragged, half-carried him in. I did not dare to look at Nora.

"I will take him upstairs and put him to bed."

She made a movement as if to follow.

"Don't come," I said; "this isn't fit for you."

She obeyed me. She seemed absolutely stunned. I made Bernard as comfortable as possible, and put out the light. He fell into a drunken slumber almost at once. When I was sure he was asleep I came downstairs. The sitting-room door was ajar. I went in.

Nora was lying face downwards on the sofa as if utterly crushed. All her spirit had deserted her; the very lines of her figure spoke of forlorn misery. She put out one hand as I came to her side, blindly, appealingly, as it feeling in the dark.

The pathetic, helpless gesture was so unlike her that I felt a great wave of tenderness sweep through my heart for her. I took her cold hand in my own warm one and held it in silent sympathy. In a few minutes she drew a long sigh and sat up.

"You know it now," she said; "I tried to prevent you, but it was no use."

"Why did you keep it from me?" I asked reproachfully; "you might have trusted me. I could have helped you all these days that I have been thinking you wanted to be rid of me."

"You thought that!" she exclaimed, "and I thought you stayed away because you—you—had found out, and were ashamed to know us any more."

"I came twice, but your messages were not very encouraging."

"I suppose not. You must forgive me. I was so miserable."

Forgive her! I could have kissed her feet.

"You must let me help you now," I said, taking her hand again.

"How kind you are!" she answered. "It will relieve me to tell you all about it, I think. We were orphans, left to the care of an uncle, who was our guardian. He was very good. I lived with him. Bernard was sent to a public school. We knew nothing of this terrible failing of his, until one day he suddenly returned home, expelled for drunkenness.

"It was a fearful shock to us. We kept him at home for a time, then he was sent to one private tutor's after another, never staying more than a few months anywhere. It was always the same story: they could not keep him.

"My uncle died a short time ago, and I determined to try and save Bernard by my influence. His love for me is the best point in his character. I brought him down to this quiet country place, hoping to keep him from evil associations. He went on so well until that day you went to town, and since then—oh, it has been terrible—he gets drink; I don't know how. To-night I thought he was safely in bed; I was distracted when I found he had gone out."

The poor girl broke down and sobbed pitifully.

I consoled her as best I could, telling her that she could not hope to be successful all at once; that these cases were always subject to relapses, but that between us we could certainly save her brother.

I left her comparatively cheerful, making her promise to go to bed and to call me if she needed help in the night. It was long before I slept myself, but I dropped off at last.

In the grey dawn I awoke with a start. Had I been dreaming or——Crack! a second pebble came through the open window on to the floor. I sprang from my bed, and put my head out cautiously.

In the garden beneath stood Nora Heron. She was bare-footed, her long hair hanging down, a dressing-gown wrapped loosely round her.

"Mr. Maxwell," she whispered, "Bernard has gone mad! He came into my room with a knife threatening to kill himself! I managed to get it away from him and locked him in. For God's sake, come!"

I hurried on some clothes noiselessly, and was at her side in three minutes.

"Quick, quick!" she cried, hurrying before me into the next house.

"Where is he?" I asked as I followed her upstairs.

"In his own room. I persuaded him to go back to it. You can hear him; he is talking to himself. Oh, it is awful!"

I unlocked the door and went in. My first glance told me what was wrong. Bernard Heron was in the grip of an attack of delirium tremens. He lay huddled up on the bed muttering incoherently. He did not recognize either of us.

"We must have a doctor at once."

Nora shrank at my words.

"A doctor? There is none within five miles. And every one will know of his disgrace! Oh, I have tried so hard to save him!"

"No one else need know. I will call up your landlord and send him."

"No, no!" she cried. "I will take the dog-cart and go myself. It will be the quickest way, and nobody but I can drive the cob. Will you stay with him? Don't let any one come into the room."

"You may rely on me."

In an incredibly short time I heard the crash of wheels outside, and knew that she was off. I sat down by the bed to wait. Bernard was tolerably quiet at first, muttering to himself under his breath. Suddenly he sprang up with a terrific yell.

"Spirits! Evil spirits all around me!" he shouted. "Don't you see them"—his voice dying away to a mysterious whisper—"in the corners, horrible, horrible things, all pointing and and gibbering. They are coming—coming!" he shrieked. "They are dragging me down—down—to hell! Nora, save me!"

I had to hold him in his bed. The paroxysm passed, but in a few minutes he was up again, with always the same cry, calling madly on his sister to save him. In his intervals of quiet I strained my ears for the sounds of Nora's return. Never did time pass more slowly.

To my intense relief, at the end of an hour, I heard the gallop of a horse, and the cart tore up, driven at a furious rate. The doctor looked very grave when he saw Bernard.

"It is not a bad attack," he said; "the worst is nearly over. But the boy looks as if he had no constitution. You had better get a nurse."

"Oh, no nurse! no nurse!" cried poor Nora. "Surely we two can manage between us. I have nursed him so often, and I am very strong."

"I quite understand your objection," the doctor said kindly. "We will see how we can manage. If he goes on well, perhaps there will be no need. I will call again later on."

"He departed, giving many directions. I went to the gate with him.

"Do you think we shall pull him through?" I asked.

"Possibly through this attack. But not through another. A very sad case. At his age, too! Pardon me, but your wife is young for such work."

"Miss Heron is not my wife."

"Oh—ah—I beg your pardon. Still, in the future, no doubt. I congratulate you——. She is a splendid girl."

I did not contradict him. My wife? At least, no other woman should ever bear that name.

For the next two days Nora and I fought hand to hand with death for Bernard Heron's life.

During that time I never closed my eyes. Once I succeeded in persuading her to go and lie down, but she was back in an hour, declaring she could not sleep.

All through one night the doctor remained with us, battling with the terrible weakness which followed the delirium.

As the sun rose on the third day Bernard was saved.

Nora broke down then. I took her in my arms and let her sob on my shoulder. I think she had not the least idea who was holding her, she was so dazed with anxiety and fatigue.

I led her to her room and handed her over to the pitying landlady, a sympathetic, motherly woman, whom I could trust to take good care of her. After that all was plain sailing. Bernard gained strength more rapidly than we expected; at the end of a week he was well enough to sit up, and in a fortnight he was downstairs and out.

One lovely July evening I came in to find Nora alone in the sitting-room. She was doing nothing for a wonder, her hands lay idle in her lap. "How is he?" I asked, sitting down and patting Chappie, who came up and put his cold black nose into my hand.

"Resting in his room. He isn't quite himself again yet. I came down to write some letters, but I haven't done it."

"What were you thinking about just now?" I said.

"I was trying not to think at all. I was just letting all this beauty and peace sink into my heart."

I followed the dreamy gaze of her eyes.

It was indeed a beautiful and peaceful scene.

The sun was setting on the green uplands, bathing everything in its golden light. The great beeches and oaks cast long shadows on the grass, the pine-stems shone pink in the glow.

Something of the spirit of the evening seemed to be reflected from Nora's face. We sat for a few minutes in that comprehensive silence which is the surest sign of sympathy of soul.

Presently Nora's voice broke the spell. "I have been wondering what will be best to do," she said. "We can't stay here. I feel as if I should never be secure again. I ought to take Bernard away as soon as possible. I was thinking it might be a good thing to buy a yacht and go on a long cruise, right away from land. He would be safer at sea than anywhere else."

I felt a strange contraction at my heart. I had been letting myself drift, trying to forget that this delightful, intimate life with the woman I loved must have an end.

Her words seemed to bring that end terribly near. I could not answer. She waited a few minutes in some surprise. Then:—

"Don't you approve of my idea?" she asked.

"I'm afraid I wasn't thinking of that. I was thinking of myself and of how I shall miss you," I answered slowly.

"Ah, how good you have been!" she exclaimed. "I haven't thanked you half enough. How can I ever repay you?"

I seized the opening.

"Give me the right to help you always," I said. "Give me yourself, my darling. I love you, Nora. Will you be my wife?"

She started to her feet. She had turned white to the lips.

"Your wife! Your wife! It's impossible!" She spoke in low tones of horror.

"Why impossible?" I asked gently. I had not expected her to be easily won.

"It's utterly, absolutely impossible. Bernard——"

"I have thought of Bernard. You shall have the yacht if you like, my dearest. We will both take care of him together."

Her face changed for an instant, her voice softened.

"Do you really care for me as much as that?

I took her hands and looked straight into her honest eyes.

"So much that unless I hear from your own lips that you do not and cannot love me in return, I will never give up the hope of making you my wife."

She turned her head from side to side, trying to avoid my gaze.

"Oh, I can't tell lies when you look at me like that!" she exclaimed at last, in the keenest distress.

"You do care!" I said joyfully. "You can't deny it! Then, in that case, there is nothing that shall stand between us!"

She wrenched herself away from me.

"Oh, don't, don't! Will nothing satisfy you? I tell you it is impossible, hopelessly, completely impossible!"

"Say you do not love me."

"I can't! I can't!" She burst into tears. "God help me. I cannot say what is not true."

"Nora," I said gravely, "what is this

great obstacle? You are not treating me fairly. You love me, and you say you will not marry me. Why not?"

She threw herself into her chair again and hid her face in her hands.

"What am I to do?" she moaned. "You leave me no choice. Oh, it is so hard for a woman to speak of these things!"

She rose to her feet and faced me, blushing scarlet.

"This is the reason, then," she said, speaking very slowly and distinctly; "Bernard is not the only one. My father died of drink, his father before him. It is hereditary in our family.

"God only knows what poor mother suffered! She died of a broken heart. But before she died, she made me promise—she made me swear—that I would never marry to bring into the world innocent children, doomed beforehand to this awful curse."

I was silent. I was too much stunned for the moment to be able to speak.

"Now do you understand?" she cried, her words coming faster as her passion gathered.

"I know that you have often thought me unwomanly! My one aim has been to become so! I have tried to tear from my heart every womanly feeling, every womanly instinct.

"I have been different to other girls since I was almost a child. I always had this behind me. I knew I must not look to the future as I saw others doing. When I was at school I used to hear the girls talking of what they would do when they came out and were married. I would go away and hide rather than listen to them.

"I have never had a girl friend. I told you I hated children. I love them so that I cannot bear the sight of them. I have steeled myself to forget that I have a woman's heart at all. I thought that I had done so. I didn't know it was possible to suffer as I am doing!"

She broke down utterly. I came to her side and took her hand.

"Nora, my darling, let us take the risk. Why should you pay the penalty of your father's sins?"

"They shall be visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation," she quoted, drearily. "It's a hard law, but it is no use to kick against it."

"No one had any right to exact such a promise from you. Is my love to go for nothing? You are very possibly sacrificing yourself to a shadow. You are perfectly healthy, so am I. Let us take the risk."

"Don't touch me!" she cried, shrinking from me as I tried to take her in my arms.

"Oh, Philip, help me to be brave! Do not tempt me to do what is wrong! If I married you we should never know a moment's happiness. Nothing can justify the breaking of a solemn oath. I knew what I was doing when I took it. I ought never to have allowed myself to love you.

"If I had been more open with you at the first, you would never have thought of loving me. As it is, we must both suffer. Don't make it any harder. I will not, I cannot, turn coward now."

I was overawed by her magnificent courage, her noble self-forgetfulness. I dared not say one other word to persuade her.

"Forgive me, Nora," I said; "you are too good for me. I love you; I shall always love you. You will henceforth be the only woman in the world to me. But I will go away. I would not cause you one instant's unnecessary pain. Some day, when we have fought our battle and conquered, I shall hope to see you again. Before I go, will you let me kiss you? Only once, dearest; it is not very much to ask."

It was a weak request. But how could I leave her so, loving her as I did? She did not answer for a minute. Then—

"Philip, I dare not," she said, "I cannot trust myself. Don't ask me, dear. You do not know me; I don't know myself to-night. I am afraid of myself. Please go away. I can't bear any more now, indeed I can't."

"Good bye then."

And so I left her in the darkness, for the sun had gone, not even touching her hand in farewell.

There was no rest for me that night. The atmosphere of the house stifled me. I could not stay indoors. I felt that violent physical exertion was imperative to relieve the mental agony I was then suffering.

All through the long hours I paced the country lanes, fighting against fate, against the terrible laws of heredity, which had brought such misery on myself and on the noble girl I loved.

What had she done to deserve it? Why should hers be the life that was spoiled? I beat myself in vain, as better men have done before me, against the immutable decrees of destiny.

I never knew how far or whither I went that night. Towards sunrise I was near home, worn out body and soul. My window was open and easily accessible from the garden. I climbed in, flinging myself on the bed in my clothes, and slept the sleep of utter exhaustion.

It was late when I awoke. I busied myself with getting together my belongings. I felt I could not stay another day, another hour, in the place. My preparations were nearly completed when Mrs. Kilpin brought me a tiny note:

"Come and see me before you go. Dr. Lane is going to take Bernard for a drive.—NORA."

For one instant an unexpressed hope arose in my heart. Next minute I felt that the bare thought dishonored her.

The room was empty when I went in, but in a few minutes she came downstairs.

She gave me her hand; it was as cold as ice. We neither of us spoke at first. Then I said:

"You wanted to see me?"

"I could not let you leave me as you did last night."

There was silence again.

"Philip, we are both most unhappy," she said. "We love each other, and we must never be anything more to each other than friends. But since it is so, let us make the best of it. If we may only be friends, let our friendship be the most perfect, the most complete the world has ever seen; not yet—not yet"—as I made a gesture of dissent—"but in a year's time, or even two.

"We will always love each other; let it be as if we were very dear brothers. When first I knew you I often used to wish you were my brother. It all seems so hard and unjust now. But we are man and woman with our lives to live. We will not be beaten in the struggle! We will not give up hope like miserable cowards! Take your life and make the most of it as, God helping me, I will do with mine.

"Last night I wished to die. I was a coward. It is easy to die; it is so hard to live! We may rise 'on stepping-stones of our dead selves to higher things.' Let us try and rise, dear, on our dead love."

She spoke as if almost inspired, as one lifted above all earthly joys and griefs.

"God bless you, Nora!" I said reverently. "It is such women as you are that let a little of heaven's light into this dark world."

She gave me her hand; I pressed my lips on it, as I would have kissed the hand of a saint.

"How ill you look!" she said presently with a sad smile.

"I have been walking about all night."

"Ah! I only lay awake."

And she followed me to the door.

"I may write?" I asked.

"Oh, yes—but not too often."

Then for one moment her brave spirit failed her.

"Philip, how can I let you go!" she gasped, clinging to me passionately.

I was struggling with my own wild longing to take her in my arms, to kiss her sweet lips, to swear that neither heaven or earth should part us——

Down the street came the rush of a galloping horse; the door was thrown violently open, and Dr. Lane almost fell into the room. He was very pale.

"Where is your brother? Has he come in?" he demanded breathlessly.

"Bernard? He was with you. He has not been back."

"I shall never forgive myself! I left him in the phaeton for five minutes, while I went to inquire after a patient. When I returned he and the carriage had disappeared. That was an hour ago. I got a horse and have been hunting for him ever since. It was easy to give me the slip in these lanes. I thought he might have come home.

"He has not been here. We have not seen him—— Hark! what is that?"

Something was coming down the road at a furious pace.

We all rushed out. To our horror, it was Bernard in the doctor's phaeton. He was evidently intoxicated, and had lost all control over the horses, who were galloping headlong down the hill. The heavy carriage rocked and swayed in an alarming way, as it swerved from one side of the road to the other.

"Good gracious! he will be killed!" cried Dr. Lane. "The sharp turn at the bottom—stop him, stop him!" he shouted to some laborers who stood on the sidewalk.

They only stared stupidly.

The phaeton was abreast of us, thundering on its mad career.

I had hastily made up my mind to try and stop the horses at a spot further down, where the road was most level. I was too late.

Some one shot past me like a flash and sprang at their heads. It was Nora! I saw her for an instant dragged along, her feet off the ground, as she held with both hands to the reins.

Then there was a sickening crash, a scene of hideous confusion, the carriage overturned, the horses down, kicking wildly. It was a nightmare on which I cannot even now look back without shuddering!

We got her out from under the wreckage somehow and carried her back to the room she had left but five minutes before. Bernard was unhurt; he had fallen clear of the wheels and was soon safely locked in his own room.

"Is she much hurt?" I asked, as Dr. Lane bent over Nora.

"I don't know. I can't tell while you stay here. Go away and send me some woman who can keep her wits about her."

I went and found the landlady; then for half an hour I waited outside in mortal anxiety. The door opened and the doctor came out. One glance at his face and I knew I must prepare for the worst.

"What is it?"

"She is dying," he said in a shaking voice. "Internal injuries—twenty minutes at the outside, perhaps less—go in, she wants to see you. She will be able to speak to you now."

Nora lay on the sofa; already in the short time that had passed there was a great change in her. The shadow of death had fallen visibly upon her, her limbs, so short a time ago instinct with energy, lay helpless and inert, but the old indomitable courage still shone from her eyes.

I knelt down beside her, hardly daring to touch her lest I should extinguish the faint lingering spark of life. She was looking at me in a yearning, appealing, odd struggling way, trying to speak.

"Bernard —!" she gasped at last.

I understood.

"He is quite safe. You saved him, dearest. I will take care of him as far as it lies in my power. I will take your place with him."

An expression of deep relief passed over her face.

"Philip—kiss me—it can't—do any harm—now."

I pressed my lips to hers, cold and damp with pain. So we sealed our love, as the rush of the Death-Angel's wings darkened the air. The mists closed in upon her fast.

She put up one hand, as if seeking my face in the darkness. One of her terriers had jumped on the sofa and was whining and licking his mistress' feet. I held her hands clasped tightly in mine. There was a long silence, broken only by her quick gasping breaths.

"Can you see me, my beloved?"

"Not now—but—I am not afraid."

They were her last words. As she had faced life, she faced death, and having passed through the valley of the shadow, her fearless soul took its flight into eternal day.

Poor Bernard's grief and remorse were terrible when he came to his senses and realized his loss. His own hold on life, always slight, slackened day by day. He seemed to have existed on his sister's superabundant energy, and without her he failed rapidly.

"It is by far the best way, Maxwell," he said to me one day. "I was doomed before ever I was born. I never had a chance in this world. They say God is merciful. Perhaps he will give me one in the next."

Who shall judge him? We, who only saw his failures, can never know what secret battles he may have fought and won.

Nineteen centuries ago there lived upon this earth a Man, a great Teacher, who read the unfathomed depths of the human heart as none have read it before or since.

He it was who uttered for the first time a supplication, familiar to us now through ages of daily use until the inwardness of it is almost lost on us: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

[THE END.]

LIFE is like a roll of costly material passing swiftly through our hands, and we must embroider our pattern on it as it goes. We cannot wait to pick up a false stitch, or pause too long before we set another.

A Drawn Game.

BY C. D.

"GAVIN. Successfully accomplished. Remember vow. Widow Eve will meet her unknown soldier, thirteenth, Paddington, No. 6, 6 o'clock. There is the cutting from the Standard; now for the likeness."

The chief opened a drawer, pulled out a photo, and examined it minutely; then looking up, with stern, critical glance, took in every detail of my appearance.

He frowned slightly, posed his head on one side, pressed his lips together, shut his right eye, and looked at me with his left, opened his right eye, and looked at me with both, made another reference to the photograph, another from the photograph to me, finally laid it down, put his plump fingers together, leant back in his chair, crossed his legs, and gave a grunt of satisfaction.

"Good. A little more black on the eyebrows, then you'll do. Now, Burgiss, here is a chance for you to distinguish yourself. The man is ours, but his mouth is shut. We leave it to you to trip the woman. Remember," he uncrossed his legs again, leant over the secretaire, and said impressively, "your point is information. Don't arrest her till you've got it. I leave you to form your own plans. You have a head on your shoulders, and, as a guide to your conduct and conversation, the text of her message will suffice."

An hour later I was patroling one of the long platforms of the terminus, a handsome, black-eyed, middle-aged soldier, with a faultless figure and a bold carriage.

The typical representatives of the travelling class were well in evidence.

There was a fat old gentleman, standing, watch in hand, muttering imprecations against the station clock, because he was warm, weary, and half an hour too soon.

There was the lean office clerk, breaking his teeth over a stale roll, in the buffet door. There was the angular maiden lady, with the corkscrewed, black-kid finger tips, dragging along a shivering toy terrier, for whom nothing was too good but a dog ticket, and whose canine lungs were inhaling murky air, prior to being thrust into the luncheon basket, alongside the raspberry vinegar.

There were besides, let me add, a younger generation of more pleasing males and females, and it was with no small degree of satisfaction, I noted the looks of admiration these, and especially the latter, frequently bestowed upon me.

But the pleasure of these idle moments was destined to be of short duration.

The bell rang with a hoarse, hollow clang, and then, with a whirl and a whiz that blew the dust in clouds before it, the six o'clock northern express swept in.

I felt my task, in this crowd, somewhat like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay, but keeping to my previous resolution, I began my search opposite the first car, and so continued onwards.

It was while standing near a door half way down, that I was startled by a shrill voice exclaiming behind me:

"Gavan, are you looking for me?"

I turned quickly. A slight little lady in weeds stood before me. Her mourning was deep and somewhat dilapidated,

A thick crape veil obscured her face, but I could see she was pale and sallow, with lantern jaws, very dark hair, and two bright black eyes, which shifted and sparkled behind the gauze as they travelled over me from head to foot.

"Widow Eve?" I bowed and raised my cap. "I am delighted to meet you at last." I observed the porters around us, and added, "You have boxes, I presume. May I get them for you?"

She shook her head and raised her first two fingers to her lips.

"You are cold," I replied, nodding to show I understood her warning. "We will walk up and down a little. Come."

"Are we safe, Gavan?" the widow whispered, as we left the porters. She raised her eyes with a plaintive, appealing look, then dropped them again, and a slender gloved hand was thrust through my arm with confiding familiarity.

It would have been an embarrassing situation to most men, but I was prepared for it.

"Quite safe, Eve," with a reassuring little pressure. "The platform is too full for any one to notice us. We will go to the further end."

We walked on in silence, but I kept my eyes open, and presently found what I required.

"Stay a minute," I exclaimed carelessly, "there is a small third-class waiting-room, actually deserted; we will step in here. Now we can talk to our heart's content. There," I closed the door and placed Mistress Eve in a seat by the fire, facing the light, "now tell me"—I flattered myself my voice was both natural and agreeable—"have you been successful in these joint affairs of ours?"

"In both—perfectly so." She leant easily back in her chair, but her manner was reserved and uncommunicative, her thin lips opened and shut like a mouse-trap, with a firm, decisive jerk.

"Hem!" I mentally commented, "we were about right when we thought those burglaries the work of the same gang;" aloud I queried, "the Highgate and the Pinner ones, you mean?"

She nodded.

Now I was not going to put up with this state of things. "Let me see," I hummed and ha'ad, "what were the exact dates?"

She smiled supercilliously.

"Come, Gavin, you know that well enough, the 27th and 4th, of course. By the way, the female accomplice you required in the West end did not disappoint her employer, eh?"

"Indeed she did not," I exclaimed heartily; "you've done right well, Evie dear."

The bait took. The woman got up and, throwing back her veil, walked up to me and laid her hand upon my arm, "And you vow?"

This was awkward. I turned the conversation. "Where is your swag?"

She started slightly, and a faint flush mounted her cheeks.

"You have surely brought it with you?" I caught her hand roughly, and, unknown to her, while I held it pressed her pulse. It was beating quickly, in uncertain, fluttering throbs. It was evident she had suddenly lost her equanimity and become suddenly ill at ease. Her voice was steady enough.

"I could not bring it."

"Why not, pray?" I asked the question in brusque, surly tones, and held her close before me, while I studied the embarrassment written on her face.

"Oh, it was too much, but your promise——" I racked my brains, coughed and cleared my throat. "You promised, you remember to give me——"

"Ah! I remember!"

"Well now, what was it?"

"Half the value," I ventured with a mad recklessness, "that's right, is it not?"

"And take the risk," she added eagerly.

I nodded. I was too full of thankfulness to do anything else.

"But," she went on with provoking pertinacity, "if I succeeded, there was to be a closer bond?" She scanned me through and through with her brilliant, restless eyes.

I turned my back to the window and registered the pattern of the hearth-rug. The dickens! I was in a fix, and I had not yet attained all my desired information. Suddenly, something in the pose of her head and the expression on her face, inspired me.

"How can I marry any one," I replied sternly, pushing her away, "unless I have proof positive they have fulfilled my conditions?"

"Don't be impatient, Gavin, don't doubt me. You shall have all, the plate, the jewels, the loose stones, all that was taken on both occasions. I have them, every one, in my possession."

Her face grew animated, her tongue was set loose at last.

"You must now give me the protection you promised. I will endanger your freedom and wear my life out for nothing less. I am not content to do great things, and get a comparative mean reward. As husband and wife, we could work with more success and less risk. To have all was your only condition. Tell me——"

"Tut, tut, you are right in what you say, but how do I know what the 'all' consists of?" I rejoined sulkily. "Is it worth my while, I wonder? I expected great treasures from those houses. Have you a list?"

She nodded quietly, and without demur handed me a soiled sheet of notepaper.

"Here, then; perhaps you will name a treasure that does not figure there."

It was an inventory, written in a neat, business hand; opposite the items the probable value of the articles was carried out.

We sat down close together to con it over. I smiled to myself as I did so. I found it corresponded exactly with the lists sent to the detective office by Lady Dunstan and Colonel Fenwick.

"Good," I commented, when I had carefully noted every article, "now tell me when I can see them, and where?"

"Oh! hem," she replied, somewhat nervously, "any time after—well—after to-day."

"Well, and where, where do you live, Eve?"

Again for a moment she hesitated, and the flush reappeared on her cheeks.

"At present, No. 3, Wynchbrook Terrace, South Islington."

I noted it down.

"And yours?" she asked sharply, giving a swift upward glance into my face.

"That's safer for you not to know, my dear, at present."

She looked annoyed, and knit her brows.

"Do you think any one suspects us?" she questioned suddenly, with another searching look.

I shrugged my shoulders, "Pooh, what do I care? They will never arrest me (which was about the truest thing I had said). You have been a brave accomplice, Eve. There is no knowing what I may do for you. Don't get frightened, though——"

She laughed, and it was neither a forced, nor an unpleasant laugh.

"Frightened! I'm not frightened, but listen, Gavan," her voice was quiet and firm, "I shall not tell you my secrets unless you tell me yours. Once more where are your rooms?"

"Well, well," I replied, "I will humor you this once"—now, naturally, I had Gavin Dickson's address off pat—"No. 2 Cutting Lane, Silver Street, E."

She nodded, and I noticed the information pleased her.

"And what will you do with the things old man, when you get them?"

"Oh! send them to a Southampton agent, and get them shipped abroad." I was as grave as a judge.

"And now, tell me this secret"—she placed her hand on my arm again, and watched me eagerly—"had you a share in that affair last night?"

"Sir John Robes'?" I asked raising my eyebrows; "why no, my love." Gavin had a harder bed than you wot of, madam, thought I, but I had had enough of her pumping business.

"Come, Eve," I got up and felt for another cigarette; "you have done splendidly; you are a famous success. To-morrow I must come and overhaul the plate. What time do you return?"

"8.30."

"Then we shall have time before you go. What say you to a drive?"

She gave me a curious side glance, a frightened look, I imagined, flitted across her face. It might have been my imagination only, anyway, the next moment it had gone, and her expression was only one of pleasure.

"Grand! I should love it, but Gavin," her voice was full of coaxing entreaty, "I must beg just one small favor. May we have a carriage? I had the car-ache yesterday——"

"By all means," I replied, "anything else you would like?"

"Yes, if you please," and, upon my word, she raised her head with quite a pretty, bewitching gesture. "May I choose the route? I like a picturesque drive."

"Certainly," I replied, "certainly;" it was my policy to humor her.

We walked down to the platform and I hailed a fly. She suddenly dropped her handkerchief—as careless ladies will—and while I went back a few steps to pick it up, she gave her order in a low tone to the cabby.

As I approached, she turned towards the door. I followed. As she jumped in, I paused ostensibly to pat the horse, and tipping the driver, whispered:

"Before going to the lady's address call at the detective office."

For a mile or so we were both supremely happy. I certainly was, for my plans had succeeded beyond my fondest hopes, and a rise of salary and distinction in the service lay within a stone's throw of my grasp. My accomplice chattered away in her shrill tones, and I was devoutly thankful she kept clear of sentimental subjects, for though I can manage most things, I must own I am a fool at this.

Her prospective marriage was, however, one of policy, pure and simple. "The sordid affections of the human heart"—as our bachelor curate styles them—were conspicuous only by their absence.

But soon we left the better streets behind, and began to clatter through gloomy thoroughfares, and whisk for short cuts through narrow warehouse-lined lanes. Then an uneasy look came over her veiled, pallid face. She looked at me and frowned.

Needless to say I appeared unconscious of the fact. Her eyes had a strained expression in them; her gloved hands crossed and uncrossed each other in quick, fidgeting succession. A slight tapping sound told me she was drumming impatiently on the matted floor.

At length she could stand it no longer.

"This is not the way," she exclaimed irritably, letting down the window with a bang. "How stupid the fellow is! I wanted you to help me in a little business affair I must execute to-night, Gavin. I could do it so much better with you.

"This is quite the opposite direction. Cabby! Cabby!" she leant through the window, but I laid a hand on her arm.

"Patience, Eve, dear. The driver is all right. I have also to call at a business firm; I just asked him to go there first. Afterwards, I shall be happy——"

She shook my detaining hand off angrily.

"There is no time to drive round the city to-night, even had I the inclination. Suppose we should be recognized? I will not go into your low dens with you. Cabby! Cabby!" Again she leant forward, and her shrill treble rose to a squeak.

"Sit down at once, Eve." I spoke with determination, and dragging her back, pulled up the window.

She sprang to the opposite one.

"Help!"

I leant forward, and stretching out my arm, seized hold of that strap also.

"Don't get excited," I smiled; "there is no occasion for help, if you will just keep calm and quiet."

She had hold of my right hand, and was wrenching the strap away. Suddenly a thought struck her. She let go and turned towards the little window behind the box seat. The time had come, I felt, for my grand stroke. I left the window, and taking her by the arms, placed her firmly down upon the seat.

"Sit there, madam, resistance is useless," I began; "perhaps you may not be aware with whom you have to deal: Captain Fenwick's agent." I sat down opposite, and threw my card onto her knee. She glanced at it, gave a little scream, and fell back against the cushions.

She lay there motionless, uttering no sound, apparently unconscious, while we drove on and on; now crawling in the rear of some endless line of vehicles, now tearing across broader and less frequented squares.

I knew she had not fainted. Once I caught her flashing a glance at me, and the gleam in her eye and the smile playing round her mouth baffled even my comprehension. At length we pulled up at our destination. I blew my whistle, and three officers came out to meet us. The widow roused herself at their approach, but if she felt resistance was impracticable before, she realized it more than ever now. Her haughty spirit forsook her with her last hopes, despair was written on her countenance, her lantern jaws dropped, the light alone sparkled in her eye, as with bent head and subdued air she followed our bodyguard into the office. I drew myself up with pride and satisfaction—as well I might—and presented her: "The Widow Eve."

"Pardon, Mr. Burgiss," a strange silvery voice startled me. The prisoner stepped into the middle of the room and raised her veil, and behold! the expression on her face had changed! "There is some solace in equality. You are unaware, perhaps, with whom you have to deal. The Widow Eve and her booty were safely lodged this afternoon. Lady Dunstan's agent." She bowed, smiled, and flung a card upon the secretaire. It bore the address: Mrs. Tylecote Ellington, Lady Detective Agency.

LEARN TO OVERLOOK TRIFLES.

There is nothing quite so aggravating as a series of petty mistakes. A day may be ruined by a lost glove, an evening spoiled by a car being "just missed," one's temper may be aroused by a succession of trifling accidents; a life may be irretrievably altered by a few sharp words. Take a remedy against these insidious little foes; do not fight them but ignore or overlook them. Samuel Johnson once wrote a sentence on this subject which is worth bearing in mind. "How trivial a matter," he said, "it will be a year from now." Think of that when tempted to sit down and have a "good cry," or to pose in sullenness, or to answer in sharp anger. "How trivial a matter it will be a year from now." How you will laugh as you recall the trifling annoyance, or blush with shame to remember the bitter words. Overlook the annoyance of a broken shoe-string, to put in a new one at once is quicker than jerking the shoe in a corner and exclaiming "It's always the way," while you bang your bureau-drawers in searching for another. When it is found you have forgotten where you threw the shoe and when at last you find it, you are hot, aggravated and ill-tempered.

Ignore the children's footsteps on the freshly swept floor, ignore the burned dish at dinner and do not ruin everyone else's appetite by complaints, ignore the confusion on sweeping day; it will all straighten out. Ignore every little rift that may spoil the precious crop of good temper and kindliness. A year from now these annoyances will seem as nothing.

But ill-temper, passionate words, unkind thoughts leave an impress on the character not to be erased until long after the small annoyance is forgotten. Ignore and overlook the small worries so that when the big ones come you may meet them with unweakened courage and strength.

Bric-a-Brac.

THE HORSE-SHOE.—The iron horse-shoe permanently fixed to the hoof was not introduced until the fourth century of the Christian era. On the grassy plains of Asia and on the open ground elsewhere shoes were not needed; but the Romans soon found that their paved roads wore away the hoof. They could devise no better remedy however than leathern soles and bags to protect the hoof, though there is reason to believe that they had an iron shoe which they put on and took off at pleasure.

A CURIOUS CLOCK.—The timepiece once owned by George IV., of England, was recently sold in Paris. It is in the form of the head of a negress. Jewels are incrusted in the bronze around the neck, to form a necklace—in the wooly hair, and in the bust as a clasp for the handkerchief. A pair of open-work gold ear-rings, long and delicately carved, hang from the ears. On pulling one of them the hour is shown on the right eye and the minute on the left. If the other ear-ring is drawn, a set of musical bells, lodged where the brain should be, chimes out the time of day.

WALRUS WHISKERS.—A peculiar but profitable industry among the natives of Alaska is the preparation and sale of walrus whiskers for toothpicks. Nature has armed the animal with whiskers that extend three or four inches from its snout, and the apparent use of which is to enable it to detect an iceberg before actual contact has taken place. These whiskers are quite stiff, and this quality increases with age. After a walrus has been killed, the natives, with the aid of rude pincers, proceed to pull out each separate hair. After a thorough drying, these hairs are arranged in neat packages and exported to China, where Chinamen of the upper class use them in their toilet.

THE FLOATING STONE.—The floating stone is one of the wonders of Corea that travellers have spoken about. The stone is of great bulk, and shaped like an irregular cube. To all appearance the stone is resting on the ground, and is perfectly free from support on any side. If two men, standing at opposite ends of it, hold each opposite ends of a thread, they will be able to pass the thread under the stone without encountering any obstacle. The natives consider the floating stone one of the greatest wonders of their land, and have erected a temple in its honor.

GULL AND PELICAN.—The robber-gull of the Pacific coast is one of the most graceful birds, and it always follows the pelican. The latter is an expert at catching fish, which it sees from a great height, diving with the swiftness of a bullet, and seldom missing its prey. But, after getting the fish in its huge beak with the pendant sack, it is unable to handle it readily, and always throws it in the air, catching it in its pouch, which answers the same purpose as a soldier's haversack. That is the gull's opportunity. The instant the fish leaves the beak of the big bird the robber swoops down with the swiftness of the wind, and before the fish reaches the distended jaws of the pelican, it is snapped up, and the pelican left far behind, looking foolish. Pursuit is useless, for the pelican is a heavy flyer, while the gull is one of the swiftest of the feathered race.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

BY N. P.

What silences we keep year after year,
With those who are most near to us and dear?
We live beside each other day by day,
And speak of myraid things, but seldom say
The full sweet word that lies just in our reach,
Beneath the commonplace of common speech.

Then out of sight and out of reach they go—
These close familiar friends, who loved us so;
And, sitting in the shadow they have left,
Alone with loneliness, and sore bereft,
We think with vain regret of some fond word
That once we might have said and they have heard.

For weak and poor the love that we expressed,
Now seems beside the vast, sweet unexpressed,
And slight the deeds we did, to those undone,
And small the service spent, to treasure won,
And undeserved the praise for word and deed
That should have overflowed the simple need.

This is the cruel cross of life—to be
Full visioned only when the misery
Of death has been fulfilled, and in the place
Of some dear presence is but empty space.
What recollected services can then
Give consolation for the "might have been?"

WON AT LAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A TERRIBLE PENALTY," "HIS DEAREST SIN," "MISS FORRISTER'S LAND STEWARD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.—(CONTINUED).

"IT would be wrong!" she said, thoughtfully.

"It would be wrong," he said, as if the admission were wrung from him. "That is, in the eyes of the world; but—but I am not so sure—I feel that, even if it be wrong, it would be a greater sin to let you go back to—to—him."

She shuddered.

"I could not go back," she said, gravely. "Not now—not now I know ——" She paused, then went on, with a sweet abandon—"that I love you!"

He bent his head until his lips touched her hair. Then he rose, and, taking her in his arms, put her in the chair.

"Let me think!" he said. He began to pace the room, and walked to and fro with quick steps. His blood was at fever heat, and something beat at the back of his brain like the crash of a wave against a rock.

Now and again he stopped and aimlessly took up some article from the table and looked at it mechanically. One of the things was a quaint Persian dagger, in an exquisite enamelled sheath. He drew the blade, looked at it without seeing it, then replaced it.

As he did so, the thing fell from his fingers. As he picked it up and poised it on the table Decima looked round.

"Why are you so troubled?" she said in a low voice, full of loving sympathy.

He came to her, and, kneeling beside her, took her hands and pressed them against his heart.

"Decima, you must leave yourself, your fate, in my hands. You must trust to me. If I let you go now, it—it must be for ever! I shall never see you again——"

She uttered a faint cry, and, stopping, looked into his face, with terror and grief in her eyes, on her lips.

"Oh, no!" she breathed. "I—I could not bear it!"

"You see!" he said. "And if you could not, how then could I, whose love for you is a thousand times greater than your love for me! Dearest, I must take you with me to-morrow. We will have to say good-bye to the past; we will have to begin a new life in a strange place—amongst strange people. Will you come?"

A great solemnity fell upon her.

"I must come!" she said, and the low, sweet voice thrilled through him. "I must do whatever you ask me. I—I could not let you go away from me, and see you no more. I—I think—I hope I should die if you did."

He almost laughed.

"That settles it!" he said, with a kind of reckless, desperate gaiety. "Now, see, dearest, you must go back to Lady Pauline's—it is too late to start to-night. To-morrow morning—at eight o'clock—is that too early?"

She smiled at the triviality of the question. What hour could be too early; what did it matter?

"Well, then, you must leave the house, and take a cab to Charing Cross Station."

"To Charing Cross Station?" she repeated, carefully.

"Yes; I will meet you there—I shall be watching for you. And then—well, the rest remains with me!"

She leant back and looked at him with perfect trust and confidence, as a woman looks when she has placed her life in the hands of the man she loves.

"And when shall we be married?" she asked. "Will it be soon—or shall we have to wait a long time?"

His face quivered.

"It—it may not be for a long time;" he said, trying to speak calmly. "Until then we shall have to live away—away from everybody. You will not even be able to write——"

A troubled, perplexed expression shone in her eyes as they rested on his. She thought, with a pang of pain and remorse, of her father.

"Why? Because it will be wrong to—to go away with you. Yes, I think I understand——"

But he knew that she did not—fully. He was silent a moment; then he said, in a constrained voice:

"You do not ask me why I cannot marry you now, Decima?"

"No," she said; "I am waiting until you choose to tell me."

"I will tell you—some day," he said, thickly. "Promise me that—that when I do, you will not turn from me, Decima! Promise me that—that when you know you will still love me——"

"I promise!" she said. "How could I turn from you? How could I cease to love you? I shall always love you, while life lasts. I couldn't do otherwise, if I tried—whatever happened. Even if—if you did not love me——"

"Hush!" he broke in, almost solemnly. "That is impossible! If you knew——"

He glanced at the clock.

"I am afraid you must go, dearest!" he said. "Heaven! what it costs me to let you go—to part with you, even for a few hours!"

She rose, her hands resting on his shoulders; and he kissed her dress as it touched him.

"It will not be for long!" she said, with a happy little sigh. "I shall not sleep, I know. I shall lie awake, and try and realize what has happened to me. It all seems like a dream——"

"May you never wake from it, dearest!" he murmured.

She laughed softly.

"I wonder where Bobby is? I should like to have seen him—to have told him —— But I am not to tell him! I forgot!"

"No," he said. "You must tell no one!"

"My things are in his room," she said. "I will go and get them——"

As she spoke she looked up and down the mantelshelf, as if she were searching for something.

"I put a long pin—a hat pin there," she said.

Mechanically, he searched also, pushing aside the curios and ornaments. In doing so, he took up the portrait, lying face downwards, and was putting it down again when, as mechanically, he glanced at it.

He did not start, uttered no cry, but he stood stock-still and stared at the bewitching face in the silver frame as if he had suddenly fallen under a spell. Gradually a deadly pallor spread over his face, his eyes became distended.

"Who—what!" broke from his set lips.

Decima had found the pin, and had turned to leave the room. She came back to him, and looked over his shoulder.

"That portrait? Whose is it?" she asked.

She had not seen his face.

His senses seemed to be deserting him; he could not remove his eyes from the face which, with its "beauty of the fiend," seemed to smile up at him mockingly, derisively. His silence smote her, and she looked at him. A low cry broke from her lips.

"What—what is the matter?" she murmured. "What—is it? I—I found it—saw it. Whose portrait is it?"

Though he tried to crush the answer down, it would come, as if he had lost control of his voice.

"It is my wife!" he said, as a man speaks in his sleep.

She shrank back from him as if he had struck her.

"Your—wife?"

The words were scarcely audible, and yet to him they seemed to ring through the room.

He still gazed at the face. How had it come there? What juggling fiend had conjured the thing up to confront him with it at this moment—the moment of his life?

"Your—wife?" Decima repeated.

And she shrank a step farther away from him.

"My wife!" he said, hoarsely, still staring at it.

Then he lifted his eyes heavily, slowly, and looked at her—looked and realized that he had spoken aloud—that he had told her.

With an oath he flung the portrait into the fireplace. It fell with a crash as the glass and frame were shattered on the tiles; then he stretched out his hands towards her.

"Yes, my wife! Decima, you know now why I cannot marry you! I am married already!"

"No, no!" She put up her hands to her ears, as it to shut out the words.

"It is true!" he said, hoarsely, with a calm more terrible than any violence. "I am married to—that woman whose portrait lies there. That is why I cannot marry you. Listen—in mercy, don't shrink from me!" for, as he had taken a step towards her, she had drawn back with a gesture of denial.

"Your wife! Then—then it is not me you love—you cannot! It is her!"

"Love her!" He laughed, with fierce bitterness. "You don't know what you say! Love! I hate—loathe her!"

A cry broke from her lips.

"But she is your wife!"

He made a gesture of despair. How could he tell her—make her understand?

"Decima, she is my wife, but I hate her! No man with a spark of manhood could do otherwise. Child, listen—don't shrink from me! Don't—don't look so, or I shall go mad! She is a bad, worthless woman—I left her—I have not seen her for years; she is nothing to me—nothing, nothing! Don't you understand? But that she is my wife, I should have told you of my love long, long ago. Ah, that you understand! Come to me! Child, have pity!"

He knelt to her, and drew her hands from her face. She yielded, or, rather, she did not resist, but her eyes were fixed vacantly above his head, as if she were trying to understand—and to hear—the truth.

"Decima, now that you know, you will not turn from me——"

"Your wife!" She drew one hand from his grasp, and pressed it against her forehead with a piteous little gesture of helplessness and despair. "Oh, why—why did you not tell me? Your wife!"

"My goodness, don't—don't repeat it!" he cried. "Try—try and forget it! Decima, you—you will not desert me; you will not draw back! I cannot live without you! If you turn from me——"

He rose and caught her in his arms, for she had swayed to and fro, as if she were about to fall. But his touch seemed to give her strength to resist him, and, after a moment—a moment during which he looked into her eyes—she recovered from the terrible faintness, and drew herself from his arms.

"Let—let me go—ah, let me go!" she panted. "I will go! I want to go! Your wife——!"

"You shall not go until you have heard me," he said, fiercely. "Child, you don't understand, or you would not torture me. Sit down!"

"No, no!"

"Ah! but you must! You must listen! Decima——"

She stood, her hands clasped tightly, her face upraised, her eyes fixed on vacancy; and her despair almost drove him mad.

"Decima——" he began again; then, suddenly, he stopped. There was a sound in the corridor. A voice—a woman's voice—said, in clear, metallic tones:

"Thanks, don't trouble! I know the way. I will go and wait until he comes in."

At the sound of the voice, Gaunt started and looked over his shoulder as if his senses were playing some fiendish trick on him. Decima heard the voice, the words, but she did not move.

"Gracious! It is she!" broke from his white lips.

He caught Decima's arm, but stood as if paralyzed for a moment, then he said, in a hoarse whisper:

"Go—that room!" and dashing open the door, half led, half dragged her into the adjoining room. Then he closed the door, and stood with his back to it, and —waited!

CHAPTER XXIII.

IT was the long arm of coincidence—guided by Morgan Thorpe's cunning, which had led Laura to Prince's Mansions that night—of all nights!

Three days before there had been a little dinner at Cardigan Terrace. It was like all the other dinners, perfect of menu, and cosy in character; and, as usual, Trevor and Bobby were the only guests.

Now, Bobby had come back from Leatmore with a good resolution. He would see no more of Morgan Thorpe and Laura, for, alas, it was as "Laura" he habitually thought of her, and not seldom addressed her; so far had poor Bobby gone.

Bobby made this resolve firmly surely that grim road to the infernal regions which is constructed of good resolutions must be the most endurable ever imagined, more endurable than stone, more slippery than asphalt!—and he meant to stick to it.

But the morning after his resolve, lo and behold, Mr. Morgan Thorpe, arrayed in faultless attire, entered Gaunt's rooms and greeted Bobby as if he were a long lost brother suddenly returned.

"My dear boy!" he exclaimed. "Where have you been? I called the other night, and was filled with alarm when they told me you had left London. I feared that you had fled from us for good." Which, though he did not intend it, was a particularly accurate way of putting it.

"I was quite cut up, I assure you, and, as to Laura"—he paused, and smiled at Bobby—"well, perhaps I'd better not say how my news affected her. Mustn't tell tales out of school, eh, Deane?"

He leant forward and touched Bobby on the knee; and Bobby grew red and hot.

"I—I had a wire from home, and had to run down suddenly."

Morgan Thorpe glanced at him sharply.

"No bad news, I trust?" he said.

"No-o!" replied Bobby, after a moment's hesitation. "At least—well, something had gone wrong—some business; but it's all right now."

"I'm glad to hear it! I was afraid one of your people was ill," said Mr. Morgan Thorpe with charming sympathy.

"And I'm glad you are back. We missed you, my dear Deane, though you were away for so short a time. Trevor came and dined with us; but—well, Trevor is a deuced good fellow, but he didn't compensate us for your absence. I never saw Laura so triste and dull! You really must come round soon! What do you say to dining with us to-morrow night?"

Bobby's good resolution rose and looked at him sternly, and, still more red and uncomfortable, he stammered an excuse.

"Engaged! I'm sorry, and I'm sure Laura will be. Well, we'll hope for another night. What are you going to do this afternoon? Drop in at the club, and have a quiet game of shell-out with Trevor and me?"

What could Bobby say? It would have been extremely difficult for him to remark, "Look here, Thorpe, I've made a mental vow to cut you; therefore—get out!" What young man of Bobby's age and temperament could have done that? Oh, parents and guardians, when you are inclined to be hard on your erring sons and wards, I pray you remember your own youth, and the temptations thereof.

"All right," he said; but there was another pause of hesitation which be sure did not escape the wily tempter's notice.

"Halt a moment," said Bobby, as his visitor rose to leave. "I'll—I'll take up those I O U's, Thorpe. I've got some out ——" He went to the bureau of inlaid satinwood and took out his check book; but Morgan Thorpe waved his hand with delightful indifference.

"No need to bother about that just now, my dear Deane," he said. "Besides, I haven't the I O U's with me. They were in his pocket-book at that moment, of course.

"And dashed if I remember what I did with them! They're at home, somewhere, I daresay. Bring the check next time you come and dine with us."

Again, what could Bobby do? He could scarcely force the check upon Mr. Thorpe.

"All right," he said again. "But—but, Thorpe, I wanted to tell you——" He colored again; but the old Bobby asserted itself and he looked Thorpe in the face squarely; and, as he did so, there was an expression in his face which was singularly like that of Decima's.

"What is it, my dear boy?"

"Oh, only this—that I've made up my mind to cut cards for the future. The fact is—well, my governor has lost some money, and I can't afford——"

Morgan Thorpe seized his hand.

"My dear Deane, I'm delighted to hear you say that!—not that your father has lost money, but that you are going to cut cards! It's strange, but I was just going to ask you if you'd mind my giv-

ing you a word of advice, of warning. I was going to ask you if you'd drop gambling. I was, indeed! It was on the tip of my tongue. To tell you the truth, Laura and I have been—now, you won't mind, you won't think us intrusive and impertinent, I hope, Deane?"

"No, no?" said Bobby; "go on."

"Well, we've been thinking about you; she is always ready to talk about you, you know. You must know that she—well, takes a great interest in you—and she begged me to ask you not to play."

Bobby felt so grateful, so touched by the beautiful woman's goodness and care for him, that he could not speak.

"And I promised her that I would. If I had not done so, she would have spoken to you herself—I'm convinced she would. Ah! I assure you the dear girl has plenty of pluck when she has resolved upon doing the right thing—when she is convinced that a duty lies before her."

"I—I am very grateful; it is very good of Mrs. Dalton to think of me, to care ——" stammered Bobby.

"She does care, I assure you—cares very much." Mr. Morgan Thorpe nodded gravely, almost solemnly. "She takes a great interest in you. As a rule, Laura is very chary of making friends; she has suffered a great deal, poor girl! and suffering hardens us—hardens us—my dear Deane. And I have never known her to come out of her shell, so to speak, as she has done with you. But, about the cards, my dear fellow? You are not offended?"

"Not a bit," said Bobby, cheerfully. "The fact is, I ought not to have gone in for play. And, well, I'm going to cut it now."

"I can't tell how delighted I am to hear you say so," said Mr. Morgan Thorpe again. "I'm a bad hand at preaching, and I don't set up for a puritan or a moralist ——"

Bobby grinned.

"But I don't mind telling you, Deane, that if I had my time to come over again, I'd never touch a card or put a penny on a horse! They talk of the evils of drink! By the great Harry, I've seen more young fellows go under through cards and betting than ever were 'downed' by liquor.

"Why, I could give you instances by the score. And, take my own case. In confidence, my dear Deane, I may tell you that Morgan Thorpe would have been in a very different position to the lowly one which he now occupies if he had made the resolution which you have just now so nobly made—and stuck to it."

"Why don't you chuck 'em now?" asked Bobby, with all the verdant innocence of youth.

Mr. Morgan Thorpe did not smile—which proves under what perfect control he held his facial expression.

"Ah! my dear boy, it is too late for me—alas! Some of us are born gamblers. It's in my blood—in my blood—my dear Deane! And poor Trevor's got the tint, too! Take the cards away from him and me, and we should go hang ourselves. It's too late for both of us—that's why I am so glad and relieved to hear that you are going to drop it. And, Laura? Well—it will be the best news I can take to her. You'll come and see her? Dine with us soon, Deane?"

"Yes," said Bobby, stifling a sigh as his good resolution went up the chimney with a moan of reproach and farewell.

"That's all right. So long!"

Mr. Morgan Thorpe paused at the door, and looked round.

"Delightful rooms these of yours! Always strike me whenever I come into them. Lord—what is his name?—still at that place in the country?"

"No," said Bobby. "He has gone."

Morgan Thorpe stopped, with his hand on the handle of the door.

"Gone, eh? Where? Gone for good?"

Bobby shook his head, rather sadly.

"I don't know. He left Leatmore suddenly, and no one knows his whereabouts. I'm half inclined to think that he has gone to Africa."

"To Africa?" A faint expression of relief shot for a moment into Morgan Thorpe's frank blue eyes. "Really! Well, he might go to a worse place. He'll escape the coming winter." With another nod and smile he took his departure.

The expression of relief grew more open as he walked away. For Morgan Thorpe had had an anxious time of it while in London.

He had bargained with Gaunt to keep his wife out of England; but Morgan Thorpe, while making the bargain, had forgotten that his sister possessed that extremely inconvenient thing—a will of her own.

And the divine Laura had not only declined to remain at Vevey, or remove to Paris, but had insisted upon going to London. He had not dared to oppose her, for she would have grown suspicious. And when the divine Laura was suspicious—well, Morgan Thorpe's life was not an easy one.

So he had been obliged to let her come, and had spent some part of his days in fear and trembling lest he should run up against Gaunt, and so, in a moment, lose his annuity.

But chance had favored him hitherto, and Gaunt had not seen Laura.

"Gone to Africa?" he mused, as he walked clubwards, with his pleasant smile on his pleasant, open face, as he smoked a choice Havana.

"Well, he may have done, and my luck may still be with me; but, on the other hand, he may not, and may turn up at any moment. My dear Laura, you will have to clear out! Yes, I shall have to move you! But how?" He pondered for a time; then he smiled.

"If we are going we may as well make a little coup before we start. A sort of spoiling the Egyptians. I'll talk it over with her. Her brain's better than mine at that kind of thing."

In which Morgan Thorpe scarcely did himself justice; for it would have been difficult to find a sharper or more astute scoundrel than himself, even in London, where sharp and astute scoundrels abound and flourish.

Three days afterwards Bobby received a dainty little note, emitting the peculiar scent, from Mrs. Dalton.

Why did he not come to see her? Had she offended him? If so, why did he not tell her what she had said or done amiss? And would he come to dinner on Monday, and give her an opportunity of explaining and begging his pardon?

So ran the note, prettily worded, and written in a thin Italian hand.

There was only one answer possible. Bobby wrote, and said that he would come and tell her that in no way had she offended him, and that she had always been all that was kind and gracious.

And he went. She was alone when he entered the drawing room, and she received him with a half-sad, half-reproachful air. She was beautifully dressed, had "made-up" a little pale; her black eyes—which, as she had heard his voice outside, had shown with contempt and boredom—now beamed upon him softly, almost tenderly.

"I thought you were never coming, that I—we—should never see you again!" she murmured. "Come and sit beside me, and tell me what is the matter?" She touched a chair near the fire, and beside her own; and Bobby dropped into it, feeling as if he had been the cruellest and most hard-hearted of young men.

'Morgan has told me that you are going to give up cards! I am so glad," she said, after Bobby had assured her that there was nothing the matter, and that he had not been able to come because he had been "busy."

"Oh, pray, pray keep to that! I have seen so much misery through gambling; and I do hate it so! Besides," she added, with an air of innocence which would have done credit to a first-class actress, "you will be able to sit and talk to me while they are playing; for, of course, Morgan and Mr. Trevor will play."

And in this way she talked to him, singing conscience to rest; and the beautiful, bewitching face blotted out all remembrance of his resolve not to see her again.

Then Trevor came in.

He scowled at Bobby as he nodded to him.

"Thought you'd gone into the country or abroad," he said, sullenly. "Deuced cold!" He gave a little shudder as he drew nearer the fire. His face was pale—it had the pallor of the red headed man—and his eyelids were swollen and inflamed. It struck Bobby that Trevor had been drinking heavily; and Laura shot a glance at him as he stood gazing at the fire moodily.

Presently Morgan Thorpe came in.

"My dear Deane—Trevor—forgive me! I'm late!" he said, with his charming smile. "Trevor, how well and fit you look!"

Trevor glowered at him, sullenly.

"Do I? Then my looks belie me, for I feel anything but fit. It's this beastly cold weather coming in so suddenly."

"Your dinner will put you right!" said Morgan Thorpe, brightly. "And there's the bell!"

As Laura rose, Trevor bent over her.

"Let that cub go first to-night," he said. "I'll stay after him: I want to speak to you!"

She made a motion of assent, and smiled up at him—sweetly, confidingly.

Thorpe was in the best and brightest of humors, and once or twice Bobby thought what that resolution would have cost him if he had stuck to it. They were such pleasant people, the Thorpes; and Laura—was an angel.

Trevor drank a good deal—as usual—through his dinner; and Thorpe plied him with "the earl's wine" assiduously; and, after a time, his face got flushed, and the sombre fire burnt in his eyes.

They went into the drawing room, where, as usual, Laura was playing so softly on the piano, and Bobby went and sat down beside her and turned over the music. Morgan Thorpe opened out the card table.

"Do you play to-night, Deane?" he asked.

Bobby shook his head.

"Not to-night," he said, reddening. Laura's left hand stole out towards him, encouragingly, sympathetically.

"Why not?" demanded Trevor, looking across at him with surprise.

"Can't afford it," said Bobby, with a touch of his old spirit.

Trevor sneered.

"That's a reason no one can meet," he said, with a sneer. "Go on, Thorpe."

Bobby flushed still more hotly; but the small hand sought and found and pressed his. The play went on; Bobby remained beside the piano, or sat on a chair close—very close—beside Laura's near the fire. They talked in a low voice, which, low though it was, seemed to annoy and irritate Trevor; and once he turned towards them fiercely, and demanded:

"What on earth are you two whispering and mumbling about?"

Laura laughed softly.

"Mr. Deane is telling me about his coach, his crammer. He must be such a funny man! Are you winning or losing, Mr. Trevor? The former, I hope. Why don't you give up cards, and come and sit round the fire, like good Mr. Deane and me?"

He swore under his breath.

"Losing," he said.

She turned to the fire again, and the play went on. Half an hour later, Morgan Thorpe said, affectionately:

"Laura, my dear, will you give us a little champagne?"

CHAPTER XXIV.

She rose and got a bottle. Bobby opened it, and she filled the glasses of the players. Then she leant over Trevor's cards, just dealt, and touched them with the slim taper finger of her left hand; with her right she smoothed the soft dark hair from her forehead.

Trevor looked up at her, and caught her hand, held it for a moment, then pressed it to his lips. Bobby saw the action, but Morgan Thorpe did not, or appeared not to see it. She pouted, withdrew her hand away slowly, and went back to her place. A moment later Trevor flung down his cards.

"Lost!" he said. "Was it double or quits?"

"It was," replied Morgan Thorpe. "Lucky I played that king, Trevor."

"Yes," snarled Trevor. "It was almost as if you knew I held the queen."

Thorpe laughed.

"Wasn't it? A mere fluke on my part—a rare piece of luck!"

Trevor pushed some bank-notes across the table, drank a draught of champagne, and rose suddenly, very nearly upsetting the table.

"I'm done for to-night," he said roughly.

He went towards the fire, and stood glowering at it, his hands thrust in his pockets.

"And so you don't play, eh, Deane?" he said, looking down at Bobby with a sneer.

"No," said Bobby, "I've chucked it. As I said, I can't afford it."

"By gracious! it would have been well for me if I'd come to that years ago," said Trevor, with a harsh laugh.

Bobby rose.

"I must be going," he said. "Are you coming, Trevor?"

"No!" replied Trevor, curtly.

Bobby said good night—"You will come again soon?" Laura murmured, as she pressed his hand—and he left.

Trevor stood staring at the fire for a few minutes; then he looked over his shoulder at Morgan Thorpe, who was lighting a cigarette.

"Thorpe—I want to speak to your sister," he said.

Morgan Thorpe looked over his cigarette, and raised his brows.

"Certainly; my dear Trevor," he said, pleasantly. "I efface myself instanter!"

When the door closed upon him, Trevor looked down at the woman sitting over the fire. His eyes were bloodshot; they, and his red hair, accentuating the pallor of his face.

"Laura! I want to speak to you," he said. "I'm sick of this."

She looked up at him with a faint smile.

"It's about played out as far as I am concerned," he went on, in a strained voice. "I can't stand it any longer, and, hang it, what's more, I won't!"

"Why use such language—what is the matter?" she murmured

"Never mind my language," he retorted; "it expresses my feelings! Laura, you know I love you; you know that I have loved you—bah! what's the use of saying it? You know it all! Will you be my wife? I want your answer. I'm sick of playing this game, sick of seeing you flirting with that—that baby boy! If you care for me enough to be my wife, say so. I can't, and I won't, wait any longer."

His eyes shone redly, his lips were set and dry, and his voice rasped huskily. For a moment the woman was daunted. She had played this man as an angler plays a trout—now tightening, now loosening, the line.

And now that he had come to the surface, lo! it was not a harmless trout, but a shark, a dragon;, with gleaming teeth—a thing almost to be feared. She turned rather pale under her powder; but she smiled tenderly as she murmured:

"You know I care for you—Ralph!"

"Do I?" he said. "But do I? I'm not so sure that I do! Sometimes I have an idea that you—you have been fooling me, that——"

The words were broken by his clenched teeth. His face grew red. Then, suddenly, his mood changed, and he flung himself on his knees beside her, and gripped her hands.

"Laura, for gracious sake tell me the truth! If you love me, be my wife—at once—at once! I cannot, I will not wait any longer. I am half mad with love for you! I am drifting to Satan, while you—you keep me shilly-shallying! You know that—you know that I am on the road to ruin! Marry me, and save me—if you love me! If you do not, then—then—I will go! Oh, Laura! have pity on me!"

His upturned face was distorted by his passion, and suddenly his head fell until his face was hidden in her lap—his hands gripped her dress.

There was something terrible in his self-abandonment, terrible and pitiable, and most women would have been both terrified and pitying.

But this woman had no heart, and was incapable of pity. The touch of fear which had assailed her passed away as he surrendered himself to his passion, and loathing and contempt took its place.

She looked down, with a move of contempt, at the bowed, red head, at the clenched hands, upon which the veins stood out in thick cords; but her voice was exquisitely tender and loving as she whispered:

"You know I love you, Ralph, and—and I will marry you if you wish it; if you think it wise to trust your life to mine, so full of the sorrows of the past."

He raised his head, his face transfigured by relief—joy, and putting his arm round her, he drew her down to him.

"Laura, my own!" he cried, hoarsely.

She suffered the embrace for a moment; she even put her lips to his hot forehead, then she slipped from his arms and rose.

"Go now, Ralph," she said, caressing his hand. "You—you almost frighten me!"

"Forgive me, dearest, forgive me! If you knew how I loved you——"

"Perhaps I do!" She smiled sweetly at him, and let her head rest on his breast for a moment. "But, Ralph, we—we must not be rash. You will wait——"

His face darkened instantly.

"Wait! Why should we?" he began.

"Foolish boy! I do not mean for long; for—for a month."

"A fortnight!" he said, eagerly. "Three weeks, then!"

She made a gesture of assent.

"Go on, dearest!"

She had to endure his parting embrace with a tender, smiling affectation of returning it; but what it cost her was expressed by the cry of disgust which broke from her lips almost before he was out of hearing.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

EVERY day in the week is set apart for public worship by one form of religion or other—Sunday by the Christians, Monday by the Greeks, Tuesday by the Persians, Wednesday by the Assyrians, Thursday by the Egyptians, Friday by the Turks, and Saturday by the Jews.

A GRAND safeguard for doing right is to hate all that is wrong.

LABOR.

BY J. H. M.

Now the rosy hours of morning
Wake you from the night's repose;
Fresh, with vigor crowned, uprising,
Labor till the day shall close.
Not with idle thoughts be musing,
Up, be noble, and be true!
In life's field of ceaseless labor
Something waits for all to do.

Every hour and every minute
Brings its store of toil and care;
Up, arise! and do your duty,
Act your part and claim a share.
Leave not till to-morrow's dawning
What to-day might well be done,
For the golden morrow coming
May perchance your life outrun.

Let the morning sunbeams find you
Working out some noble plan;
Up, and bear your standard bravely,
And in earnest play the man.
Toil with pleasure, cease not doing,
Toil and care will soon be past;
Labor now, while power's left you,
Rest comes sure and sweet at last.

An Errand by Night.

BY C. L. B.

"CANNOT you make your visit a week or two earlier?" wrote my prospective father-in-law. "We are terribly dull, and Clare would make an excellent study for Mariana in the Moated Grange. Saving the moat, the comparison is apt too in other respects. Surely no man was ever swindled by advertisement into such a dreary, joy-forsaken hole as this same desirable shooting-box five miles from anywhere, stabling execrable and game nowhere. Clare of course romances over the gables and other gloomy appendages by which that lying advertiser justified the application of 'picturesque' to his worm-eaten old ruin, but the place is telling on her, I can see that. You had better come at once, and wire us the train, we will meet you."

* * * * * *

By the same post came a plaintive little letter from Clare herself which I could not resist. I started the next morning, beguiling the long journey into the wilds of the north by dwelling with satisfaction on the seclusion of the place which roused Mr. Trevannon's disgust.

The scarcity of the game did not affect me in the least, nor the meagre character of the stabling, and as for the isolation which my genial, society-loving old friend found so depressing, it would give me a fortnight of my sweet little betrothed's companionship, free from interruptions.

Disappointment met me at Dreighton Station in the shape of Mr. Trevannon alone. "I've left Clare at home," he said in reply to my anxious inquiry. "She's got a slight attack of neuralgia, very slight, nothing to speak of. It's the damp of that infernal place, I told you it was telling on her. I've been to the doctor and we're to call for the physic on our way back. But bless you, my boy, you're the physic to cure her," with a reassuring wring of my hand.

"She'll be all right now you've come, never fear. I'm delighted to see you," he added once more, surveying me with unspeakable satisfaction and bustling the porter with my luggage. "What's the news? Anything stirring in town? Where's your gun? Thought there was nothing to shoot? Well, you're not far wrong, but I tried a new cover yesterday and made a very fair bag, but I can't ask anybody here, it's such a deucedly poor place. There now—what do you think of this for a town?" he went on, as we mounted the dog-cart, apostrophizing the long, straggling village street with his whip. "This is our one point of juncture with humanity, our market town, where, if you want anything, you must order a week in advance."

"Doesn't the anticipation add to the satisfaction of getting it in the end?" I asked, laughing at his indignation.

"But you don't get it," was the grim reply.

Delaying at intervals to take in sundry parcels, in a short time we had left the sleepy little town behind us and, as the scattered houses receded and marks of civilization became more and more scarce, I turned my eyes on the wide waste of wild open country revealed to us with the keenest admiration.

Mr. Trevannon briefly summed up the scene as a desert, but the grand sweep of the purple moors, brooding under a twilight sky, which, sombre gray overhead, was broken on the horizon into hurrying masses of threatening storm-clouds, the solemn pines crowning the little eminences which here and there broke the monotony of the view, and the hills which bounded the distance and seen through the darkening atmosphere rose in endless curves of deepest indigo, filled me with delight, the more so that but a few hours before my vision had been limited to the square of sky which admitted the light of day into my London office.

How, a few hours later, I cursed the sensibility which made me rejoice in that wild, wide prospect of Nature! How bitterly I regretted that my eyes, in ranging over that limitless space, had retained no definite recollection of the narrow, mesh-like roads which intersected it! That no crag or tree or sign-post had impressed itself on my imagination with sufficient vigor to create a landmark in that dreary waste.

It was nearly dark before, turning sharp off to the right, we gradually left the moor behind us and, descending into the valley, entered a lane bordered with thick copse wood on either side and leading into a wider road, which, after one more turn, brought a gate within sight with bright lights gleaming behind it.

In a few minutes we were at the door and Clare, looking infinitely sweet and bewitching in her white dress with two blue eyes glowing softly radiant above it, was clasped in my arms.

"I thought you were never coming, Rupert," she whispered, nestling to me with a sigh of content. "I have been watching, oh, ever such a long time."

"As if we could get here quicker, you impatient child. And you never came to meet me. What do you mean by that?" I said, putting my hands fondly on her shoulders and holding her before me, while I noted with anxiety her unusual paleness and the dark lines beneath her eyes. "Let me look at you. What do you mean by being ill to greet me?"

She met my scrutiny with a merry laugh.

"It's nothing at all," she said. "It was papa's fault. I wanted to come so much, but he wouldn't let me. Papa is such a fidget."

"Nothing of the kind," I said, shaking her with playing severity, and feeling sure from her light manner that nothing serious ailed her. "Your father was perfectly right not to let you drive in the night air; I should not have allowed it either. Here is your medicine. One dose to-night, mind."

"After supper then," pleaded Clare, slipping from me with a shake of her pretty shoulders and a wry glance at the bottles.

I followed her into the long oak-beamed room which, whatever its day-light aspect might be, looked inviting enough to night with the bright fire flickering and darting among the dark shadows and quaint angles, and lending more than their own warm glow to the golden chrysanthemums, and trails of ruddy autumn leaves, with which Clare had strewn the table.

We spent a merry evening. Mr. Trevannon, rejoicing in the prospect of companionship, was in his liveliest mood, and Clare, whom I had not seen since she had gone abroad with her father in the summer, could not weary of the account of my doings in the interval.

We talked away over the fire till after midnight, when, reproached by my little fiancee's weary eyes, I persuaded her to go to bed. We followed not long after, my host lighting the way up the broad, old-fashioned staircase, and leaving me at my door with the permisson to get up as late as I liked.

It was a quaintly-shaped room, with, low raftered ceiling, and wide open chimney down which the wind whistled with a warning of coming rain.

The window, with its faded chintz curtains and overhanging gable, looked out, over the neighboring coppices, away to the moor which lay a sheet of dense blackness, the dreariness of which the feeble moon rays, struggling at intervals between masses of driving cloud, seemed but to intensify.

Undressing at my leisure, I mounted the huge four-poster and was soon asleep.

How long I had slept I could not guess when I awoke suddenly with a vague sense of having been roused by some articulate sound, mingling with and yet quite distinct from the rain which was falling heavily on the tiled roof, and beating against the lattice.

I sat up and listened, but for some minutes I could distinguish nothing above the noise of the descending sheets of water. Then, when my ears becoming accustomed to the continuous sound, I was enabled to distinguish something beyond it, I heard a sharp click over my head followed by a tremulous rustling of the curtain near my pillow.

I sprang from the bed and, striking a match, gazed upward.

I saw that the bell wire running the length of the ceiling was quivering as if from some recent disturbance, at the same moment I heard a footstep in the adjoining room, followed by a low moan of pain.

This room as I knew was occupied by Clare, and the sound roused inexpressible terror in me. Throwing on some clothes I ran along the passage, and roughly waking Mr. Trevannon acquainted him with what I had heard, and besought him to go at once to Clare.

But half awake, and only partially comprehending the nature of my fears, he instantly obeyed my summons and together we made our way to her room.

A night-light was burning on the dressing table and by its ray we saw Clare, half lying on the hearth-rug, half leaning on the foot of the sofa, with her arms hanging listlessly downwards. Her face, convulsed as if with acute pain, was livid in its whiteness, and her long fair hair, drooping on her shoulders, clung in damp tendrils to her forehead, where the blue veins stood out with terrible clearness on the transparent temples. It was evident she had endeavored to ring for assistance and sunk exhausted in the effort.

She opened her eyes at our entrance and tried to speak, but the effort was unavailing, and, with a rigid feeling of despair clutching at my heart, I saw the lids droop back helplessly over the heavy eyes, while her breath, slow and labored, seemed to come fainter and fainter from between her marble lips.

Powerless to speak, I rushed for my brandy flask, and raising the drooping figure in my arms, tried to force a few drops between the teeth. The act roused Mr. Trevannon, who until this moment had knelt helplessly on the floor chafing his daughter's cold hands and calling to her to speak to him.

He bent forward and clutching my arm as in a vice—"The doctor—Rupert—for God's sake—go!" he said hoarsely.

At the sound of the words Clare recovered a momentary consciousness, and, gazing up at me, seemed to echo the entreaty with her eyes.

I need no second bidding. Stopping but to alarm the servants, I dashed down the stairs, and, wrenching back the bolts of the door, made my way blindly into the night.

My late arrival in the evening had not served to familiarize me with the locality, but, with the intense sharpness of faculty which extreme fear sometimes gives us, I heard in the distance the stamp of a horse's hoof, and following the direction of the sound, I fought along through the storm till I reached the stable, into which I gained an entrance with some difficulty.

Once inside, the wind, whistling in the doorway and sweeping in furious gusts through every crevice of the tumble-down building, extinguished each match as I ignited it, before the tremulous flicker had revealed anything to me beyond the bare spot where I stood.

At last, in desperation, I set light to a bunch of straw, and by its transitory aid succeeded in finding a lantern with a stick of short, guttered candle in its socket, which with its smoky gleam partially illuminated the obscurity, and enabled me to distinguish behind the door some harness hanging from a wooden peg, and in the stall the chestnut mare gazing round at me with startled eyes.

With frenzied speed I flung the saddle across her back, strapped the girths, and thrust the bit into her mouth. In reality but a few minutes could have elapsed, yet to my strained senses a lifetime seemed to have passed before, backing her through the doorway, I put my foot in the stirrup and mounted.

Rather by the mare's instinct than by any guidance on my part, for my eyes, brought anew in contact with the impenetrable darkness after the dim light of the stable, were incapable of discerning any object, I reached the gate, which yielded at a jerk from my whip, and passed out into the road.

Once between the hedges I urged the mare to a gallop, and soon striking to the left, we were on the highway, from which, as I remembered, opened the narrow lane which we had traversed in the early evening.

A few minutes brought me to the spot, and I stooped low on the mare's neck to escape the blackberry briars and thorny branches of the hazel trees, which broke in all directions from the copsewood, stretching black arms across the path with which the mare in her headlong speed continually came in contact; and every now and then I was lurched violently in the saddle as, swerving to avoid them, she plunged sideways and stumbled in the deep ruts which, filled with rushing water, furrowed on either side the lane up which we made our difficult ascent.

At last, breathless with the speed we had made, and panting from the strain of holding the mare on her feet as, the incline becoming steeper, she slipped painfully with every halting onward step in the mass of soft ooze, a scarcely perceptible lifting of the intense gloom, together with a sense of helplessness before a freer inrush of the storm, told me that we were leaving the sheltered lane, with the heavy, overhanging branches and murky darkness hedged in by woody thickets, behind us, and merging on the open country.

A few more efforts from the mare's heaving flanks and we were on the top of the hill, whence a short stretch of level road brought us to the edge of the moor, which lay a waste of brooding darkness bounded only by imagination of greater wastes beyond.

The storm was now raging in all its fury. The rain seemed literally to pour from the black heavens in a great sheet of water which, caught by the furious wind as it swept with all its relentless force over the desolate heath, was dashed hither and thither, a mass of driving, surging spray, which flung itself against me as if to tear me from my seat, and beat into my eyes like blows.

At the spot I had reached two roads diverged in different directions, their pale sandy tracks standing out like wavering gray lines, melting in the distance in the general darkness, and the momentary indecision I experienced, before taking the one which lay to my right, was followed by the terrible fear that, if my memory played me false in one turning I might wander about till daylight on that desolate waste and Clare might die without a chance of the help I was struggling to bring her.

The thought filled me with foreboding, and whereas all my efforts hitherto had been strained to get forward with the utmost possible speed, now, with my heart beating wildly forward and every nerve and pulse urging me onward, I forced myself to curtail the mare's pace, beset with the miserable terror of losing the beaten track.

And with every advancing step this at first purely nervous apprehension became a formidable possibility. Even between the hedges, to keep the road in the dense darkness had been hard enough, but here, where no bank or bush marked its limits, where nothing save its mere bareness distinguished the track from the heather which bordered it, the task became one of stupendous difficulty.

With the darkness alone I could have coped, but the rain struck with heavier and more blinding force as we rose higher on the moor, and sometimes for minutes together I could distinguish nothing before or beyond but the flashing water which enveloped me; and the howling of the wind as it rushed and roared in unspent fury over the wild free space added to the paralyzing confusion of my senses.

At last, after an interval during which I had bent my head before a succession of furious blasts which threatened to tear the reins from my numbed fingers, I felt that the mare's smooth trot had become an irregular, halting pace, constantly broken by heavy stumbles, while every now and then she came to an absolute standstill.

With despair at my heart, I sprang to the ground only to find my fears realized. Everywhere a dense, pathless mass of heather and gorse surrounded us, whose long spike needles pierced my hands as I stooped to extricate myself from the low, bushy clump into which I had alighted.

Taking the mare by the bridle I wandered with her hither and thither, groping my way with my feet sinking deep at every step in the sodden soil, and the weight of my saturated clothes dragging heavily at my weary frame; but no sign of the gray track met my despairing

gaze, and the wild waste of heath seemed but to become wilder and denser in whatever direction I turned.

Once more I mounted the mare, hoping with a last hope, that by turning backwards I might again reach the highway, which it was possible led, though by a longer route, to Dreighton. But alas! in many turns and counter-turns all idea of direction had hopelessly forsaken me, and all I could do was to urge the mare recklessly onward on the chance of finding some landmark in this region of terrible sameness.

On, on we went, now to the right, now to the left, sometimes skirting a rugged hillock with a group of trees tossing wildly in the wind, sometimes doggedly keeping straight forward, now and again crossing a half beaten track and following it with throbbing hope until it lost itself again in the waste.

Never to the longest day that I live shall I forget the horror of that night.

The awful, all-embracing darkness, the ceaseless downrush of the rain, the weary stumbles of the worn-out horse, the shrieking of the wind, and above and beyond and through it all Clare's face with white lips quivering in agony and the blue eyes raised to mine in dumb entreaty.

How long the horror of bewildered wandering lasted I cannot tell. I only remember that presently the fierce glow into which my feverish haste had plunged me began to give place to a sense of bitter cold, my sodden clothes seemed to press upon my chest like the heavy touch of icy fingers, and at intervals a violent shivering which I was powerless to control shook my frame from head to foot.

It was while, raising myself in the saddle, I tried by a tremendous effort of will to resist the oncoming of one of these convulsive spasms that I suddenly discerned through the flashes of the sleet the figure of a man looming towards me, and at the same moment, without any warning, the mare's hoofs struck upon the smooth level of a sandy road.

The man's pace was rapid, but it was a staggering, jolting movement, betokening exhaustion. His shoulders were bent to meet the storm, and as he came nearer to me I could hear above the roar of the wind the heaving of his breath.

A few minutes before I should have hailed the appearance of a fellow creature as a Heaven-sent deliverance, but now, with the pale track stretching before my eyes, I regarded it only as a secondary succor and waited not to halt as, urging the mare to the greatest speed she could muster on the heavy ground, I shouted "Is this for Dreighton?" as I came up with him.

Instead of moving aside to give me a free passage, he pulled up immediately in front of me, compelling me to slacken my pace, and, lunging forward at the mare's head, met me with an excited volley of words, of which his panting utterance, coming to me through the howling of the wind, did not permit me to distinguish a syllable.

Without stopping to consider its purpose, but maddened at an action which thus baulked my progress at the very moment when hope was renewed within me, I shouted to him savagely to move, at the same moment forcing the mare forward with utter indifference to any injury he might sustain.

Compelled, in self-preservation, to give way before me, he loosed his hold of the bit, and I caught the gleam of two desperate eyes as he staggered backwards.

But, when I attempted to pass him, an impetuous resolution seemed to take possession of him. He sprang towards me, and seizing the stirrup dragged me, by sheer force of strength, from the saddle, and before my numbed limbs had gathered sufficient power to resist the sudden onslaught, he had flung me from him into the heather, mounted the mare in my place, turned head, and through the darkness I caught the rapid strike of her hoofs becoming fainter and fainter in the distance.

With what maledictions I cursed my own stupidity! How glaringly obvious appeared the puerile weakness which had allowed itself, with such ease, to be overcome!

In my rage and despair I did not consider the probability that, with all the odds of opportunity and place in my favor, I should have been no match against the supremely exerted force of the man who had worsted me, how much less so when the encounter had found me exhausted with exposure and the terrible strain of that midnight ride.

Well I knew the utter hopelessness of pursuit. The attempt would only again ingulf me in the meshes of that fateful heath and carry me yet farther from the goal in view. The only thing I could do was to keep straight on along the path I had found, praying that it might lead me aright.

With strenuous effort I compelled my stiffened limbs to move swiftly, and by degrees the vigorous exertion renewed the circulation in my veins, and with a joy to which I had never experienced anything akin I found the moor beginning to merge imperceptibly into more fertile country, and the sleeping cottages which I passed here and there told me that Dreighton was at hand.

The knowledge lent quicker motion to my feet, and in a few minutes I was in the straggling street, standing with gasping breath upon the steps of the house at which we had called but a few hours before.

A half-clad servant answered my thundering summons and, looking at me with scared eyes as I stood in the porch with the water streaming from me in all directions, said that her master was out. He had come in late in the evening but he had gone out again directly, she did not know where, he had left no message.

The answer fell upon me like a blow, and as I staggered again into the street it seemed to me that some terrible nightmare had overtaken me.

At first I was unable to form any collected idea, but after an interval the longing to return to Clare asserted itself to the exclusion of all other plans and every faculty became bent to fulfil that idea with the least possible delay.

Luckily a solitary policeman whom I encountered, endeavoring to shelter himself in the shadow of a doorway, came to my aid at this juncture. With his assistance I procured a horse and cart from the local butcher, who, after some persuasion, agreed to drive me.

Fully three quarters of an hour elapsed, however, before we were upon the road—that same highway which, as I had rightly conjectured, led in the same direction as the shorter route over the moor.

It was when sitting in motionless inactivity by the side of my sleepy companion that I endured the keenest suffering of that night of torture.

No despair which had wrung my heart during the former hours of weary struggle on the bleak heath equalled in intensity the misery of that quick drive along the level road, with the rain becoming lighter every moment and the dark clouds giving way in all directions to patches of white moonlight.

The horse seemed to go with maddening slowness, and it was with the greatest difficulty I restrained the wild inclination to leap to the ground and finish the journey on foot. When, at last, we reached the farm, my limbs trembled so violently that I could hardly descend.

The first thing to meet my ears as I crossed the yard was the neighing of the chestnut mare which was standing at the stable door.

I passed through the garden, with the dripping shrubs and tangled creepers, and, ascending the steps, waited for admittance.

I gathered a ray of hope from the face of the servant who opened the door, but I dared ask no question. Without a word I went down the hall.

As I reached the staircase a man came with quick strides out of the dining-room and, surveying me with a rapid glance, suddenly advanced towards me with his hand outstretched.

"You must forgive my roughness to you just now," he said, in a deep, melodious voice. "It was my last resource, and it saved her. A little longer, and it would have been too late. She is sleeping now, and with the help of God we shall pull her through."

Beyond that they filled me with a bewildered sense of hope, the words conveyed little meaning to my mind, as I mechanically took the hand held out to me, with a confused expression that its grasp was familiar to me.

He passed with noiseless strides up the stairs, and when he reached the landing, Mr. Trevannon, with a face over which years seemed to have gone since I had last seen it, met him, and whispering, "Still sound, doctor," hurried to me.

"It's all right, my boy," he said with a throb of unspeakable thanksgiving in his voice.

I tried to pass him, but he laid a restraining hand upon my shoulder.

"Not yet, Rupert. We mustn't wake her. You shall see her presently."

Then he drew me into the dining-room, and in a subdued undertone, of which no sound could reach the room overhead, he told me of my darling's providential escape.

Dr. Rydon, it appeared, had recently through advertisement engaged as assistant an elderly man who was qualified in his profession and produced excellent testimonials.

For a few weeks he had every reason to be satisfied with his services, but later on an occasional peculiarity in the man's manner caused him vague anxiety, although nothing definite occurred to enable him to justify his suspicions.

When Mr. Trevannon called on his way to the station and, describing Clare's ailing condition, asked him to prescribe for her, Dr. Rydon was just preparing to go out for the evening.

He went to the surgery, and writing a prescription for a tonic as well as a composing draught, to be taken at bed-time, since Mr. Trevannon had laid stress upon his daughter's sleeplessness, laid it with others upon his desk to await the return of the assistant, whose duty it was to dispense the medicines.

It was late when the doctor returned home and, happening to enter the surgery in search of a light, he was startled by the sound of heavy breathing.

Hastily lighting a candle, to his amazement he found his assistant stretched in profound slumber in the easy-chair. A moment's glance was sufficient to tell him that the man's sleep was one of helpless intoxication. With fear instantly on the alert, he examined the row of bottles placed in readiness for him to carry on his more distant rounds in the morning.

A dark brown mixture, labelled "Poison. The lotion to be applied frequently," immediately attracted his attention, and, putting it to his nostrils, he identified it by its aroma as the draught he had prescribed for Clare.

That the actual lotion had been substituted for the draught was the terrible supposition that immediately presented itself, and the man's hopless panic when he roused him from his drunken slumber, and confronted him with his fear, was sufficient corroboration of it.

In a frenzy of terror, the doctor rushed from the house, carrying with him an antidote to the poison contained in the liniment, and his providential meeting with me, just as he was on the point of sinking from exhaustion, had enabled him to carry his journey to the end, and arrive in time to save Clare.

As Mr. Trevannon finished, the doctor himself came into the room, and reported that his patient was awake and asking for me.

Need I linger over that meeting?

In a few days Clare was herself again, and as we wandered together over the purple moors we often traced between the heather the marks of my terrible journey on the night when I so nearly lost her.

FORGIVING SMALL INJURIES.

How often are our feelings hurt by a sharp look, a sarcastic laugh or an ill-tempered remark. Our ignorance in some common branch may be exposed to laughter, a thoughtless slip of the tongue jeered at, or a careless mistake be received with derisive laughter. What a feeling of anger surges through one! Months may pass, the amused spectator will have forgotten the incident but the scene is seared on one's memory, perhaps never to be forgotten nor forgiven.

These little slights are harder to forgive than big injuries, they rankle and sting, and seem to grow to huge proportions. Being brooded over they seem like the deepest insults. How are we to treat these mocking foes?

First think carefully on both sides. The scoffer probably at once forgot the incident, is it worth while then to cherish a dislike against an unconscious foe who can never make reparation?

Might you not have laughed [if the cases had been reversed? Console yourself with the thought that if you have made one such blunder he has probably made ten. Everybody has. Next, make a resolution to forgive and forget the slight, and do you be more careful about scoffing at other people's mistakes.

The greatest surgeon may not know who wrote Henry Esmond, nor the greatest artist the situation of Moscow, but are they not great all the same?

Your hand is never the worse for doing your own work.

Scientific and Useful.

ASBESTOS SOLES.—Asbestos wool, compressed by the hydraulic pump to a thin sheet, and waterproofed on one side, is recommended for the middle soles of boots and shoes. It is said that such a compound sole will protect the wearer from all the ills which are supposed to be associated with the access of heat, cold, and moisture to the feet.

A NEW ENVELOPE.—No small number of people have a deep-rooted objection to licking the gummed flap of an envelope, and many have been the devices introduced for the purpose of doing away with its necessity. A new idea gets over it by removing the gum from the body of the envelope, so that when the former is moistened there is no lingering taste of gum left in the mouth. But why did no one think of this effective reform before?

SOFT AND HARD.—Soft wood becomes stronger than hard wood under pressure. The case of a block of Oregon pine, taken from the middle of an upright which formed a part of the timber support in the Comstock mines for twelve years, gives an example of the effect of heavy pressure on wood fibre. It is so hard it cannot be cut with a knife; and one of its sides is polished from the squeezing it has undergone. Yellow pine from the lower levels of the Comstock has been so compressed by the enormous weight that its density exceeds that of lignumvitæ

PAPER SAILS.—Sails of paper are coming into use and are found more economical than cloth ones. They are made by adding to the paper pulp glue, alum, alkaline silicate, fat, and bichromate of potash, then rolling two sheets of paper, which are pressed together before drying, and afterwards treated with sulphuric acid, which turns the united sheet into parchment paper. When washed with a soda solution and dried, the parchment paper becomes very strong and resisting, and is made into sails of any size by means of cement of the same pulp which enters into the composition of the paper.

Farm and Garden.

IN COLD WEATHER.—A swinging door for the entrance for swine in winter they soon learn to operate, and it keeps out snow and much cold. It is hung from the top and rubs on both sides as it swings in and out.

QUINCE HEDGES.—In the English colonies of Africa hedges are commonly made of quince-trees. The branches, being planted and interwoven by hand, form an impenetrable barrier to cattle, and they annually bear an immense crop of large fruit.

MAKING THEM FAMILIAR.—Heifers that are to be in milk by and by ought to be kept with the milking herd that they may get accustomed to the sounds and excitement of domestication. Their product will vary less by and by at the pail.

BOILED OIL.—A gallon of boiled oil well soaked in will furnish a protecting cover for all the farm wagons, plow handles, horse rakes, etc., on the farm, keeping the weather from them and thus saving the cost a dozen times. It should be put on hot.

FARMS UNDER GLASS.—It is prophesied that the farmer of the future will grow his crops under glass. Hot-house fruits and vegetables may then be raised for the poor and needy on a very cheap scale. Vast sections of land may be roofed over with glass, and a perpetual summer climate will make the plants and trees and vines flourish as in the tropics.

GRASSES.—The best kind of grasses to sow upon a marsh subject to overflow, according to some of the best authorities, are four pounds red top, two of fowl meadow grass, four of timothy and one or two of alsike clover per acre. In many cases low lands can be easily drained or partially freed of water by the digging of one or two ditches. If this can be done, it surely should be practiced, for low lands are the richest and best for grasses.

My father says Dr. Jayne's Expectorant saved my life when I was a baby, and I regard it as the best remedy in the world for all diseases of the Throat and Lungs.—A. T. BOWLING, Merchant, Elvira, Ky., Dec. 5, 1890.

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For a long time the Editors of the POST have wished to hear just how you like the paper. Will you write us, now, and tell us? Tell us, freely and frankly, what you like best in the paper, what you do not especially care for, and what you would like to see in it.

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We want to make the POST from now on better than it has ever been before, and each reader can help by suggestion and opinion.

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
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Praising the Past.

Is it not possible that we occupy ourselves too much with the future and too little with the past? The struggle for existence no doubt impels us constantly to peer into the Beyond, to take thought for the morrow which does not always take thought for the things of itself, to stimulate ourselves into action in order that we may progress and not retrogress. But, if the business of life consists mainly of looking forward, is not the poetry of life to be found chiefly in looking back? It is a cold doctrine which teaches that the past is nothing. If this were so, then life itself would be nothing except a succession of sensations, to be faced as stolidly and unimaginatively as possible, in the knowledge that they were but of a moment's duration, and would then be of the past—nothing. What need to toil and worry for a future that is so soon to pass into forgetfulness?

The theory that what is past is done with is an insupportable one. It may be argued for harmlessly enough; but, if it is lived up to, you take the half—and that the certain half—of life away, and leave nothing but uncertainty and shadow. Sometimes indeed we would, if we could, wipe clean the slate of our memory. We all have lived through moments which have bruised the heart and seared the soul. We all have skeletons in our cupboards that grin and gibe at us when we open the door. No one can unfold the chart of his memory without having his eye caught by the ugly crosses that mark past wreckages. Yet there are few of us whose past is so dark that we would wish to expunge it altogether from our history.

We do not hold with the view that the country or the man is happy who has no history. We do not believe that life is one long ribbon, over which a man marches to a predestined end, and that the part he has traversed should at once be rolled up, so that it may be no more visible to his eyes. On the contrary, we would assert, with all possible emphasis, that the past is as much a part of man's life as the future, or even more; and that not simply because it may be a guide to the future, but because of its present living interest. For is not the past an explored country to any part of which the fairy-like gift of memory enables us to transport ourselves back at any time? And is not the memory of an event sometimes more real than the actual experience of it?

The influence of the past over the present and the future is not of course a matter for argument—it is defined and indisputable. But we may at least ask ourselves whether it is only in regard to its influence that we are to view the past. Are we to read it simply as a lesson-book, by way of finding out from its pages some hints or ideas whereby we may, from time to time, fashion our lives anew, put a curb to our passions, or stimulate our ambitions in new directions? If we do this, then we revert to the theory that the future is everything, and that our past, perhaps our present, have no concern for us except with regard to our shaping of the future. But can we conceive a more narrowing view than this, which, from day to day, lops off pieces of our lives and leaves us always with a slowly contracting horizon? Why not take the larger, and, as it seems to us, wholly reasonable view, and regard ourselves continually as possessors of the years that have passed, not purely as a matter of experience, but as a matter of memory?

We do not want to play the single role of our own schoolmasters. The function is an important one, and not to be lost sight of; but to be educated is not the end, if it is the aim, of education. In whatever terms we express it, pleasure is the aim of life, and education, whether in text-books or in morals, is simply part of the contributory scheme. But the view that concerns itself with the future alone makes only for scrappy pleasures and happiness. There is a pleasure in store for you on the morrow—the hands of the clock turn round, and the pleasure has come and gone. Has it gone, then, entirely? And have you no further consolation than to wait for the next pleasure that comes along?

The pleasure that is "a moment white, then melts for ever," can be so named only as an act of courtesy. Here memory comes to our aid, and, sorting and sifting one experience from another, tells us which was real and which spurious pleasure. Just as a book must almost inevitably stand the test of time, and be removed from the immediate circumstances of its publication, before it can be safely ranked as a classic, so must our pleasures be revolved in the winnowing machine of recollection before we can definitely decide which is wheat and which chaff.

But, of our true pleasures in life, can we not say that, having been, they are? Are our emotions, our joys and transports so much waste of energy, or simply so much material to go to make up a future which, while we look forward to it, is already slipping away into a past? Are they not rather still part of ourselves, the special charges of that integral part of us known as our memory, as the future is the special charge of our imagination? We do not enjoy a succession of lives—a new life with each fresh sensation—but our present sensations are read in the light of the past, and our life is a mingling of the whole. So a hard cheerless present, or a blank prospect, may be relieved by a bright past.

We may indulge, then, in the practice of looking back, not merely as an idle solace, but as a means of living life's pleasures over again and making existence fuller and richer. Who of us is there whose mind is so ill-laden with pleasurable reminiscences that he cannot dispel a fit of morbid depression by reciting to himself the striking instances of his own good fortune? The most interesting novel that any one can enjoy is surely his own story, with all its plots and counterplots, its romantic episodes, its comedies and tragedies! Do not one's schooldays alone, in most instances, furnish reminiscence enough to while away many pleasant hours? Could you not now, after twenty or thirty years' liberation from the class-room, sit down with an old friend who shared your experiences, and talk the night through in recollection of those old days—of their follies, blunders, and successes.

You must realize that the future is not everything. For presently—in a few years' time—it will come about that you practically have no future left, mortally speaking. You will have retired from active participation in life, and you will fall back on retrospect, quietly chewing the cud of your reminiscences. Will the past be nothing to you then? If you have led a happy pleasurable life, shall you not find legitimate delight in fighting your battles over again? Then you will at least recognize, what you may not be so willing to acknowledge now, that the past has not gone from you, but that it always must and will be a living vital part of your life—as actual a possession as the present.

WANTED.—By the Editors of THE POST, a complete file of the issue for 1888. In exchange we will send one year's subscription, free. Only a single set is desired, and the first one offered will be accepted.

IF it is good to do right against our desires, it is better to do right in response to them. Whoever has reached that condition where, in any respect, his wishes and his duties correspond, has every reason so far to rejoice. It is only where they do not thus harmonize that what we call self-sacrifice has its place; and we should never forget that this is but a transitory phase, yielding gradually to that higher life wherein we wish to be that which we ought to be, and wherein we are glad to do that which is right and best to be done.

IN all social and domestic life, in our relations with our fellow-men, in our ideas of right and wrong, in the choice we make, in the influence we exert, the thought of what we are bringing to bear upon futurity is of the utmost value. It is one of the strongest checks upon that selfishness which busies itself in the search for personal gain or pleasure to the exclusion of broader or higher aims.

GOOD steady work counts. High-pressure activity makes the most fuss and show, but it is generally uncertain, spasmodic, and liable to reaction. Rush, dash, impetuosity, and excitement catch the eye, and are boastful and pretentious; but calm, persistent, onward movement ensures the highest and best gains in the long run.

MEN'S great actions are performed in minor struggles. There are obstinate and unknown brave men who defend themselves inch by inch in the shadows against the fatal invasion of want and turpitude.

Correspondence.

P. S. C.—There is considerable difference between the size of the hands and the feet, and, curiously enough on opposite sides. Thus, whilst the right hand is generally the larger, it is the left foot which is the bigger and stronger of the two. This is probably due to the fact that we stand habitually on the left foot.

P. P.—The stage is at best an arduous profession, in which very few attain to any celebrity, and those few generally have great personal attractions and an ardent love for their work. Your education has evidently not fitted you for the profession, and, as a general rule, we recommend any other career in preference to one which involves such wear and tear of mind and body.

FANNY.—Do not be anxious concerning the possibility of not finding a proper person as a husband. We think every lady so disposed has the chance, at some period in her life, to get married, though any effort on her part to hasten that desirable opportunity will be likely to frustrate it. Exercise ladylike dignity, but do not be cold and reserved toward your gentlemen friends. There would be nothing improper in asking any gentleman you have a liking for to call on you. You are still young, and need have no fear of dying an old maid.

GRACIE.—It is very unmannerly to lean back in one's chair at table, with hands in pockets. But there is nothing unmannerly in eating as much bread and butter as one desires. Your theory that "bread should only be used as an absorbent of fatty substances, and an accompaniment to the dinner," is an arbitrary one, and has nothing to do with etiquette or good manners. The same may be said of your other question. You seem to be animated by a pecuniary view of the subject rather than by considerations of etiquette.

T. C.—The process of tanning skins is one which can hardly be carried on in a small way. The oak bark, which is the staple article of the business, is ground into coarse threads in a mill from which a decoction is made called ooze, into which the skins are immersed after being properly cleaned and subjected to a weak decoction of tan, and in this stage they remain for a fortnight to several weeks, during which time they are frequently handled; thence they are removed to a vat containing a stronger infusion of bark until they have absorbed all the tan; finally they are put into a still stronger infusion.

AGNES L.—Prettiness is not beauty; features, however graceful to the eye, if not lighted up by the mind, have no living beauty; and a plain face is thus often more beautiful from its intellectuality than the most symmetrically formed features which lack that expression. The homely proverb says: handsome is that handsome does. We are sadly afraid that young ladies who send us detailed catalogues of their charms, and ask us to call them handsome, do not interpret that word in the sense implied by the proverb. However, as both of you are certainly pretty, if you cultivate your minds no doubt you will also become handsome.

INNOCENT.—There is always present in the hair a certain quantity of mineral ingredient; very fair hair contains magnesia; in chestnut and brown hair there is sulphur, with but a small amount of iron; in black and brown hair iron predominates; gray and white hair contain only traces of sulphur, and no iron; when the mineral pigment fails, the hair turns white or gray; the supply of iron pigment usually fails before that of sulphur, therefore black or dark hair is wont to turn gray earlier than fair hair; debilitated health is a frequent cause of the hair turning prematurely gray; premature grayness is often constitutional; we agree with you that it is not a "terrible calamity."

RUBY.—In the case of doubtful invitations to people's houses much depends upon the manner of the person who asks you. One would have expected that, after the evening spent at your house, you would have received a formal call, which you could have returned as a matter of course. The relationship that has existed between you would certainly justify you in making an ordinary afternoon call upon the lady's day, if she has one; but a more familiar visit ought not to be paid without a distinct invitation, specifying the time when you are expected. "Come at any time" has no meaning except to familiar friends. You have drifted into a rather absurd misunderstanding, especially if a friendly feeling has sprung up between you; but the way out is for your friends to make their invitations definite.

LEX.—A widow generally wears mourning for two years—crape for a year and nine months, plain black for the remaining period; the entire dress is made of crape for the first year, after that the dress is trimmed with bands of crape, which become less and less as time goes on; the widow's bonnet used to be worn as long as crape was worn, the only difference being that, after the first year, a long net veil was substituted for the crape one; a widow's bonnet is now seldom worn for longer than a year, and some widows prefer a small plain bonnet of ordinary shape instead; widows' capes are entirely out of fashion, except for elderly ladies; the etiquette for mourning and funerals is much less rigid than it was thirty or forty years ago, simplicity and good taste having succeeded much that was absurd and needlessly distressing.

CLOUD AND SUNSHINE.

BY C. E. G.

Would life be such a pleasant thing
If it were always bright,
And on the sunshine of our lives
There dawned no restful night?

Would this green world be half so fair
If from the radiant heaven
On mossy lawn and thirsty flower
No blessed rain were given?

And would the course of faithful love
E'er half as true remain
If never tears nor passing cloud
Lent for an instant pain?

Ah, no! For grief gives purer joy,
And ev'ry gentle shower
Serves but to point, thro' cloud and shine,
To Love, the eternal flower!

To Her Doom.

BY E. L. E.

"WHAT answer do you intend giving Lord Montire, Eleva? Such an opportunity should not be neglected, an eligible offer seldom comes twice to a girl in her lifetime."

"Too true, mother; but only think how old he is—older than papa, I really believe."

"Oh, your papa is absurdly young-looking to have grown-up sons and daughters. Lord Montire is not old; barely sixty."

"And I am not three-and-twenty."

"True, but you have been out five years; that makes a girl almost old in society."

Eleva gave a silvery little laugh, as she glanced at herself in the mirror over the mantel-shelf. "I do not see any crow's-feet clawing at my eyes, and my cheeks are as plump as any milk-maid's; I look and feel quite too young to acknowledge myself the least bit old.

"Oh, it does not matter the least how one looks," cried her mother, somewhat impatiently. "Hebe, herself, would lose the power to charm in her sixth season if she remained unmarried."

"That is so," said Eleva, resuming her seat at the window with a sigh; "but I might remain at Dumbarton this summer. I don't suppose you would care to have three unmarried girls to chaperon this season; and as poor Loo is dying to come out, we cannot in justice keep her in the background any longer."

"You are quite right; Loo was eighteen last birthday. I must present her in May; it cannot possibly be delayed any longer."

"Well, then, let me remain at home; Dumbarton is much better than London in summer; indeed, to me it is the loveliest place in the whole wide world."

"What folly. You might as well give up the world altogether as stop down here at Dumbarton all alone by yourself. What excuse could I make for your staying behind?"

"Oh, I didn't think of that; but really, mother dear," this with a little catch in her voice, "it is rather hard to give up my youthful day-dream and wake to find myself an old man's bride."

Lady Grace Dunford's face clouded, and her eyes were dim with tears. She was a handsome woman, although nearer fifty than forty, and loved her children devotedly; not a hard, worldly mother by any means, but rather the friend and companion of her grown-up daughters, as mothers should be who expect their daughters' love and trust.

"Pray don't think, darling, that it is my wish you should sacrifice yourself for the family good," she said, as she laid her hand with a gentle loving touch on her daughter's bowed head. "If it were not that your father, as M. P., for the county, is bound to go to London during Parliament, I would remain at Dumbarton, to save the expense of next season in town."

"Ah, that is where the shoe pinches; I remember how Madame Lamote dunned us last year; she must have a few hundreds at least, or we must look elsewhere."

"And where to get that few hundreds I hardly know. Twenty-five per cent. off the Michaelmas rents left us as poor as church mice."

"All this points one way," answered Eleva with a suppressed sigh. "We must awaken to the sad realities of life; sentiment must give place to necessity; I must accept my fate with the best grace I can."

"With the best grace I can;" she repeated, as she sat down in the library of the mansion to pen an answer to Lord Montire's offer of marriage. But her heart was not in the answer she must make perforce.

She rose up from the table before she had penned half a dozen words and went to the window to look out. "Who would believe that poverty compels me to accept this offer?" she said half aloud. "Aye, who would? I can scarce believe it myself."

And it was little wonder such thoughts crossed her mind, as she was looking out of the mullioned window at the wide extended park and the woods that lay beyond as far as the eye could reach.

"What a mockery life seems!" she cried. "Men call me handsome; the world thinks me the daughter of a rich man; and yet to-day I am about to sell myself—it sounds ugly, but facts are stubborn things to deal with—yes, I am about to sell myself to the highest bidder, because my father, forsooth, is a poor man with a reputed income of ten thousand a year. Oh, the folly of it all! and alas, the cruel mockery too!" and spite of herself the hot tears rained down her cheeks in mere self-pity.

And yet this woman was the envy of half the fashionable set she knew.

She was lovely—lovely as a poet's dream: tall and graceful, with soft rippling brown hair, and skin like a pearl, with the softest rose bloom on her dainty cheek.

It was not because she had lacked suitors for her hand that at three-and-twenty she was obliged to choose between gilded poverty and unbounded wealth as the wife of a man of mature age.

Eleva, like many another woman, had given away her heart before she realized the value of the gift; and once given it remained in possession of her idol beyond recall.

Hugh Trevor was the son of Lord Trevor, her father's nearest neighbor. He was two years older than Eleva. In childhood's early days they had been playmates, and in later years they were lovers.

The present Lord Trevor was elder brother to Hugh by some twenty years or more. He was son of his father's first wife, whilst Hugh was son of the second, and consequently many years younger.

The heir of Lord Trevor had always been, from his birth, deformed—weakly, crabbed and vindictive, as the deformed are apt to be—yet he was fond of his only brother, and after his father's death, which event happened when Hugh was barely twelve years old, he behaved with parental kindness to the orphaned lad.

Hugh was always considered his brother's heir; nobody ever dreamt that the hunchbacked Lord Trevor would take to himself a wife—he was supposed to be a misogynist; at any rate he seldom spoke of women except to sneer at them.

Hugh Trevor had but a small income in his own right, and that, with his pay as captain in the Guards barely sufficed him for pocket money.

His brother, with no little grumbling, paid his debts more than once, but as he was heir presumptive to the Trevor title and estates, money was not hard to obtain elsewhere. The Jews had ascertained that the present lord was not a life on which to effect an insurance at an easy rate.

Hugh Trevor was not openly engaged to Eleva, yet it was an understood thing, in her family at least, that they were to be married sometime in the near future.

But when Lord Trevor married some young person whom nobody knew, a change came over the gay young Life Guardsman's brilliant prospects, and debts and duns bore down on him in one continuous and pitiless stream.

The brothers met once after Lord Trevor's marriage and parted in anger. The most pressing of Hugh's debts were paid, but for the future, if he did not live within his income, bankruptcy stared him in the face.

Things became rather more hopeless, when in due time a son and heir was born to the noble lord, who was for so many years supposed to be a rabid misogynist.

The birth of this son happened about a year ago; since then Hugh Trevor had changed into a foot regiment bound for foreign service, and Eleva heard no more of her quondam lover except by report.

Eleva was not the woman to throw him over because misfortune and disappointment had crossed his path in life.

But what possible excuse could she make, even to herself, for waiting for a man who had never asked her to be his wife or written a letter to her since his absence?

Still, she would have waited had not circumstances prevailed against her.

Sir Robert Dunford was the owner of an immense estate, and reputed to be a rich man; but heavy election expenses and a reduced rental had compelled him to effect a mortgage on his property; so that, with a nearly grown-up family to place out in the world, he found his income reduced to nearly half.

His wife was the daughter of a Scotch earl, and related by blood or marriage with the highest families both in England and Scotland, so that it behooved the baronet, unless he absolutely kept out of society altogether, to keep up a large establishment and entertain his friends, if he would be entertained by his friends himself.

He had three sons and four daughters to provide for. The eldest son was in the army and rather extravagant; the second was at Oxford, and the third and youngest at Rugby.

Of Eleva, the eldest daughter, we have already spoken; then came Maud, just out of her teens, and Lucy, called by the pet name of Loo, who was impatient to cast off the restraint of the schoolroom and make her debut on society's stage, and last of all, Ada, who was not quite fourteen years of age.

Lady Grace Dunford was not one of those managing mammas whose chief aim in life is to get their daughters well married. She had been content to let Eleva drift on, as one may say, for five years with a free hand to choose or refuse any suitor that offered.

But at length a sort of crisis had arrived. There was no longer any hope of Hugh Trevor claiming Eleva for a bride, seeing that for two years he had made no sign; not to add that his affairs were hopelessly entangled, and there did not seem the least prospect of his being able to support a wife even if he did venture to propose for her hand, although Eleva was true and brave and would have waited on indefinitely had Hugh Trevor come to her, even at the lowest ebb of his fortune, and asked her to trust him and to wait.

But alas, for both, he made no sign. Eleva liked and respected Lord Montire. Still he was so much older than herself that they had little in common, yet if she must perforce give up the dream of her youth and marry, she had rather her husband should be a friend and mentor than a young and ardent lover.

When one is about to take a plunge they should not stand shivering on the brink.

Eleva suffered a hundredfold more in making up her mind to accept Lord Montire than she did when the final step was taken, and congratulations poured in on her from every side.

She had done well for herself and people praised her, until she accepted the situation with complacency if not with unalloyed regret.

It could not be claimed for Eleva that she was beyond the little weaknesses of her sex.

Settlements and diamonds, not to speak of a ravishing trousseau, and costly wedding presents took off the keen edge of her discontent.

She had accepted her fate. The past was a sealed book to her. She might sometimes remember what was written there, but to open the book, and pore over it page by page until those halcyon days were lived over again, would be treason to her liege lord and master.

So she put away the past like the brave woman that she was, and determined that if marriage, in her case, proved a failure, to make the best of the situation, and not let the world into her secret.

* * * * * * *

A few years passed over Lady Montire's head without any particular event happening in her married life worth recording.

Lord Montire was of a retiring, studious disposition; proud and sensitive, yet cold and undemonstrative to a degree of apparent indifference.

Two daughters had been born of their marriage, which he most unreasonably resented, although he kept his own counsel concerning the matter; still he showed many unmistakable signs that he was disappointed at not having a son and heir.

Although he did not care much for society, he always removed to his town house, in Belgrave Square, after Easter, and remained there till Midsummer, entertaining in good style, although he seldom went out himself, except to formal dinner parties. Lady Montire, on the contrary, was seen everywhere. She was an acknowledged leader in fashionable society.

It is just possible that she had grown proud and haughty; with the world at her feet, and society's adulation ringing continually in her ears, it was not easy to remain diffident and unassuming.

Still she was a gracious, courteous woman, and considered qui'e peerless in her undimmed youthful beauty.

She had never had any particular cause to regret the step she had taken in accepting Lord Montire. He had never been an affectionate husband, but he was attentive and polite, and neither capricious nor exacting, as some over-affectionate husbands are apt to be.

No possible fault could be found with Lord Montire's general conduct; and yet his wife might have been a far happier woman had he not been so unapproachable.

He prided himself in his freedom from emotional display of any kind. It was his ambition to be considered a stoic, and he most certainly acted up to it.

And yet he was proud of his beautiful wife, and loved her, too, with a strength of passion almost undreamt of even by himself.

He had gone on so long repressing every show of feeling that he had well-nigh smothered the passionate love that lay down deep in his heart of hearts, yet it only required a sudden rush of uncontrollable excitement to fan it into flame.

But nothing, as yet had occurred to vary the even tenor of his married life, or bring out the passionate forces of his inner-self.

He allowed his wife full liberty of action. She invited whom she pleased to make up their house party in the country, or to be their guests in town. He seldom interfered in the household arrangements, unless by his wife's especial request; and was in every respect what the world would call a model husband.

Lady Montire had so many relatives in society that she seldom went to any evening entertainment unless accompanied by some one; very often her sisters stayed with her, and then she acted as their chaperon.

Her sister Maud had been married about a year; and as the Liberals were now in office Sir Robert Dunford was no longer county M. P., and Lady Grace decided not to come to town that season as retrenchment had now become almost a necessity; it was therefore decided that Lucy, or Loo, as she was commonly called, should accompany her sister to town, and remain the guest of Lady Montire for a few months at least.

Loo was Lady Montire's favorite sister, indeed, the sisters were devotedly attached to each other. The love of Lucy for her elder sister amounted almost to worship.

There is no love more purely unselfish than that of a sister, and Lucy's devotion to Eleva was one of unquestioning faith; she looked up to her, and was prouder of the esteem in which Lady Montire was held than had she been the recipient of it herself. She never felt the least pang of jealousy when she found herself passed by for the reigning queen of beauty and fashion.

It is the vogue with men about town to affect the society of young married ladies, or women owning to grandchildren; some callow dudes have been known unblushingly to rave about women of mature middle age.

As it happened to be the fashion to rave about Lady Montire's beauty, she had a respectful train of admirers whenever she appeared at rout or ball, whilst Lucy, who was a really handsome girl in the bloom of youth, almost remained unnoticed.

Lady Montire received men's homage as though it were her due, and as a matter of consequence men bowed before her as though she were a queen. No breath of scandal had ever tarnished her fair fame.

She herself, indeed, felt so strong in her armor of indifference and pride, that she never dreamt it possible to be assailed by the power of temptation. She had lived down the one love that had power to move her heart, and was quite invulnerable to the tender passion.

Little more than a year ago she had read in the papers of the death of Lord Trevor's only son. Hugh would now be heir presumptive once more.

She wondered in a dreamy sort of way whether the brothers might not become reconciled and Hugh returned to England. If they met again—what then? Oh, nothing; she had outlived the romance of her youth long ago.

But when, about three months after the death of his little son, Lord Trevor also passed over to the great majority, she found herself thinking of what might have been.

Alas, it was now too late. She only hoped they might never meet again. It

was so many years ago. Doubtless he had forgotten her—men so soon forget—and yet although she had often told herself that she had outlived the romance of her early youth, she could not receive this well-worn axiom without feeling a sharp pang of regret.

She would not care to meet Hugh Trevor as a stranger, she could not trust herself to treat him as a friend.

* * * * * *

"Come with me into the conservatory," said Lady Montire to her sister, one evening, as they stood side by side in a crowded ball-room in Park Lane. "The rooms are so warm, I feel quite faint."

Lucy looked at her sister in some alarm; her face had suddenly changed to the hue of a winter snowdrop, even to the lips.

"Lean on my arm," she whispered reassuringly; both sisters shrank from a fainting scene in that crowded assembly. "Once we reach the outer air you will be all right."

Lady Montire gathered herself together with an effort to steady her nerves, as she laid a trembling hand on her sister's arm, and they began thread their way through the fashionable throng.

Once the conservatory was reached, Lady Montire sank down on a seat beneath a spreading palm like one unstrung. "Can you get me a glass of iced water?" she gasped. "The faintness is passing away, but my mouth is parched."

Lucy rushed away in some little excitement to obtain the cooling draught of water; she dreaded lest her sister might faint away during her absence.

Lady Montire gave a deep sigh and passed her hand across her brow. "I am glad to have escaped a scene," she whispered under her breath. "My heart gave a bound the moment my eyes lit on the old familiar face, and then stood so still that I wonder I did not faint. I must get away the moment Lucy comes back; this sudden shock has quite unnerved me."

She heard quick footsteps approaching and looked towards the door.

"Ah," she gasped, with a sudden rush of color to her cheek, "it is Hugh. He has not forgotten me."

Yes, it was Hugh Trevor coming towards her with outstretched hands and a light in his eyes that she remembered too well.

When Lucy returned with the glass of iced water, accompanied by Lady Hartop, Hugh Trevor's only sister, they found Lady Montire bathing her face with a handkerchief that Hugh had dipped in the fountain that plashed dreamily under the palm tree close by the fauteuil on which Lady Montire was seated.

"Are you feeling better?" asked Lady Hartop. "No wonder you felt faint, the rooms are like an oven; I sent Hugh to look after you, whilst Lucy and I fetched something to revive you." Then, without waiting for an answer, she went on: "My carriage is at the door; I was just leaving when we ran against your sister: will you come with me? I shall pass your door on my way to the Mountjoys, where I promised to look in on my way homewards."

Lady Montire's carriage had been ordered an hour later on, so she gladly availed herself of Lady Hartop's offer.

Hugh Trevor made himself useful in fetching the ladies' wraps, and as Lady Montire was still weak and trembling, he escorted her downstairs and handed her into the carriage.

"I am so glad I met Lady Hartop," cried Lucy, the moment they were alone together in Lady Montire's dressing-room; "you would have been quite ill had we been obliged to wait for your own carriage, and Lord Trevor made himself so useful; there is nothing like a man, after all, to assist poor lone females in distress, let the new woman disparage him as she may. I shouldn't have known Hugh had he not been with his sister; but somehow it seemed like old times when he wrapped me up so carefully, just as he used to do when we went to children's parties at The Hall. Do you remember the fun we had, and how careless and happy we were in those days, when Hugh was but a stripling, and you were relegated to the schoolroom and poor little me to the nursery?"

"Well, that is such a long time ago that I wonder you have not forgotten all about it," replied Lady Montire wearily. "I don't care to recall the old times, or the happy days of childhood; women have to face the stern realities of life with a brave heart and a steady front. It is so long since we met Lord Trevor that that one cannot regard him as other than a stranger."

"How odd to hear you say that. For my part I feel just as though we parted from him but a short while ago, he has returned so little changed."

"Oh, indeed; I thought he looked much older."

"He is a fine, soldierly-looking man, bronzed a little by the eastern sun, but he does not look a bit old—how should he? he is barely thirty yet."

"Well, well, we have had enough of him," exclaimed Eleva a little impatiently. "I am tired, and my head aches—good-night."

"How unthinking of me!" cried Lucy quite penitently. "I will go to bed at once; perchance to dream of my hero," she added with a little laugh. "What if I have met my fate to-night?"

For the remainder of Lady Montire's stay in town, Lord Trevor attended her everywhere; as her sister was always one of the party, some people thought Lucy Dunford was the attraction, whilst others, and they were notably Lady Montire's dearest friends, shook their heads, and hinted that Lord Montire must be blind not to see how his wife carried on with her old lover.

The parties most concerned, however, lived on in a fool's paradise.

For a day or two, after so unexpectedly meeting Lord Trevor, Lady Montire kept the house; she had caught a chill, she said, on the evening of Lady Stanmore's ball, and was generally out of sorts; she even went so far as to ask her husband to let her run down to Beechhurst for a week to recruit her strength.

But as the fates would have it, they had accepted an invitation to dine with the Lord Chancellor, an old friend of Lord Montire's, and complaisant as he was in most things, he would not consent to her leaving town until after they had attended this function together. There was to be a reception after the dinner, and it was at this reception that Eleva again met Hugh Trevor, and found him so self-contained and courteous, without the least apparent consciousness of their former relations, that she regained her courage and laughed at her recent fears.

She never afterwards paused to reflect, but accepted events as they chanced to happen, and it cannot be denied that she enjoyed life with a zest, for one short month, that she had not known for years.

But all things come to an end. When midsummer arrived Lord Montire shut up his town house and returned to Beechhurst once more.

There was to be a large shooting party in August; until then, only a stray guest, now and then, favored Beechhurst with a visit. Things were dull at the old country mansion, in spite of glorious sunshine and the finest scenery in the world.

Eleva did her best to shake off the ennui that devoured her; she walked, rode and drove from early morn till dinner time, and nearly always alone.

Her children were too young for companionship, her husband buried himself more than ever in his studies and researches, and was sometimes so intent in tracing some ancient myth to its source, that he spent half the night in the library turning over the dusty tomes of a long-forgotten age.

It is not to be wondered at that after more than a month of this dull, uneventful life, Lady Montire hailed the arrival of a large house party with unbounded satisfaction.

Her sister Lucy came over from Dumbarton, some twenty miles distant from Beechhurst, to help Eleva entertain her guests.

Lucy had been on a visit to some friends at Ryde; she had had a gay time of it boating and yachting, not to speak of afternoon garden parties or evening cinderellas.

Lord Trevor had been at Cowes most of the time with his yacht, on which Lucy, according to her own account, had enjoyed the most delightful sails ever enjoyed on the vasty deep.

Lord Trevor had told her he should arrive at The Hall the first week in August; he was going to entertain large house parties up till the middle of September, and his sister, Lady Hartop, would stay with him to receive the guests.

The Hall was about nine miles from Beechhurst. They, namely, Lord Montire and his wife, would be sure to meet Lord Trevor and his numerous visitors often.

And so it was that Lucy rattled on, the burden of her song being Lord Trevor. Lady Montire was a good listener; she never once uttered the name of Hugh Trevor, and seldom interrupted Lucy with questions, but would listen in a dreamy sort of way, with a far-off look in her eyes, as though her thoughts had traveled far elsewhere.

Beechhurst was an immense red brick building, in the Tudor style, with a grand entrance hall, lofty reception rooms, some half-dozen broad staircases, and numberless passages leading to state chambers and other less pretentious rooms.

A score or two of guests could be housed at Beechhurst without overcrowding the mansion.

Some thirty guests with their attendant maids arrived by the twelfth of August, and on the fourteenth there was to be a grand battue, followed in the evening by a ball, to which half the county were invited.

The usually dreary old mansion of Beechhurst became all at once the scene of unwonted excitement and gaiety.

Lady Montire excelled herself as hostess. No one had ever seen her so courteous and attentive to all around her. She never seemed to tire of finding some new surprise and amusement for her guests.

Her flow of spirits never flagged. Her quaint conceits and smart repartee called forth peals of merry laughter, in which she joined with the glee of a school girl in her first teens. She was so brilliant and witty, and withal so superbly handsome, that she charmed the ear and captivated the eye of every one she met.

Guests came and went in succession until near the end of September, when the hunt breakfast was given at Beechhurst, and no more house parties would be entertained until Christmas.

Since August, Lord Trevor had also been entertaining guests at The Hall, but seldom a day passed without his visiting Beechhurst. His constant visits, however, caused little or no comment, and Miss Dunford was supposed to be the attraction that drew him thither so often. Lord Montire was decidedly under this impression, and welcomed his constant guest on this account.

But now that the hurry and bustle was over, and the house began to settle down to its usual quiet, Lord Montire, unobservant as he was, was struck with the change that had come over his young wife.

She was pale and listless, unless when she shook off her languor to receive a visitor, and the visitor that came more often than any other was Lord Trevor. Still, not the faintest suspicion crossed his mind. His wife had more than once entreated him to take her for a change to the Continent, and now he himself began to see that thorough change of scene was becoming absolutely necessary to save her from utterly breaking down. To know this was to act promptly.

He gave orders at once that everything was to be in readiness for their departure for the Continent within a week. The evening of the day on which he came to this decision Lord Trevor dined at Beechhurst. There was no other guest except Lucy, and the little party appeared rather dull and constrained, spite of spasmodic efforts on the part of Lord Trevor to start some subject of general conversation.

After dinner in the drawing room the same constraint was all too apparent until Lady Montire went to the piano, and Hugh Trevor followed to turn over the music.

Lucy sat at a table a little apart, with her head leaning on her hand, apparently intent on examining the contents of a sketch book. Suddenly her face flushed crimson, and rising from her chair she advanced toward Hugh Trevor and regarded him with a stern, fixed expression.

"It is getting late," she observed, "and you have a long ride before you. What time did you order your groom to bring round your horse?"

Hugh Trevor quailed before her stern, fixed gaze. Then his eyes wandered towards Lord Montire, who was standing on the hearth rug with his back towards the fire.

Ah, he had betrayed himself. Some word or look had revealed the secret of his unspoken love; the love which consumed him like the hidden forces of a volcano. He was too much a man of the world, however, to show his discomfiture here.

"I ordered my horse to be at the door shortly after 10 o'clock," he answered, consulting his watch. "I must not stay another moment, my horse gets restive if kept waiting."

Lord Montire barely touched the hand he extended at parting. His good night sounded strangely like a malediction. Even his dull eyes had at length been opened by the look of passionate love Hugh Trevor bestowed on Eleva, as his hand accidentally touched hers on turning over the music.

The following day found Eleva more listless than usual. Lucy was cold and constrained, Lord Montire preoccupied and sullen.

When they met at luncheon scarcely a word was spoken until the butler handed his master a note, saying a servant had brought it from the Hall, but no answer was required.

As he read the note Lord Montire's brow cleared; he tossed it to Lucy with a smile.

"You will not see your devoted swain until you get back to Dunbarton. He has been called away to the bedside of a sick relative, who is not expected to recover," he said gaily.

The note simply stated this, and expressed the writer's regret that he should not be able to bid his friends adieu before they left for the Continent.

Lucy's face brightened. "Oh, it is just possible to have too much of even a devoted swain's company; he will be all the more welcome after a few months' absence," she said with a laugh and a blush.

Lady Montire also read the note, but made no remark, although her eyes brightened with a look of intense relief, as though a load of care had fallen from her shoulders.

Lord Montire retired to his study as usual after luncheon, and Lucy went up to her room, ostensibly to write letters.

Left alone, Eleva took a book and walked across to the Pleasance, a retired spot overlooking a broad lake, which for length and depth might be compared to many a Highland loch.

"I am glad it is over!" she exclaimed as she sat wearily on a seat. "Has Lucy begun to suspect, I wonder? Her manner was cold and distant to-day. Oh, how she would hate me if she knew Hugh loved me. Heaven helping me, I will never see his face again! I felt last night as though on the brink of a precipice, without one helping hand held forth to save me falling headlong down."

She shuddered at the thought, and shading her face with her hands, fell into a long and painful reverie.

Out of this, however, she was at length aroused by the sound of approaching footsteps. She looked up quickly to find Hugh Trevor almost close beside her.

"I am so glad to find you alone," he exclaimed, "with no eye, save that of heaven, to note the anguish of this parting hour."

Eleva turned white as a snow drift; a stifled sob escaped her lips, but she made no answer.

"I thought you would understand," he went on. "Oh, believe me, Eleva, I would rather die a thousand deaths than bring a shadow of dishonor on your fair fame! I have been fool enough to think I could play with fire and not be burned—but I am not villain enough to betray a friend by pouring a secret love-tale into the ear of his wife.

"Heaven alone knows how I have striven against this consuming passion. I thought to conquer it and marry your sister. I am going away for a year; if Lucy is still free on my return, I will ask her to be my wife; it is the least reparation I can make for my unmanly deception."

He paused for a reply. Eleva could not have uttered a word had her life depended on the effort.

"It is needless to prolong this parting. Farewell, Eleva—farewell, and for ever!" he cried in a tone of unspeakable anguish, as he held out his hand towards her.

Eleva started from her seat, threw her arms around his neck, and leaning her head on his shoulder, burst into a passion of tears.

There is no limit to a woman's love—no sacrifice she is not prepared to make for the man to whom she has given her heart's affection.

Had he asked her to fly with him at that moment she would have forsaken everything and followed him to the ends of the earth.

He knew this and great beads of perspiration bedewed his brow. The temptation was a terrible one.

How it would have ended who can tell, had not a third person appeared on the scene; and Hugh Trevor found himself suddenly confronted by Lord Montire.

Overwhelmed with confusion, and scarce knowing what he did, he thrust Eleva from him and stepped back a few paces.

Surprised by the action into a consciousness of her self-abasement, she looked up to find her husband regarding her with an unmistakable look of contempt and abhorrence.

Oh, for instant annihilation! Had she fallen thus low, even in her own sight, all in a moment?

Overwhelmed with shame, dazed, confounded, she covered her face with her hands and staggered from the spot, like one suddenly blinded by the lightning's vivid flash.

"Villain! Betrayer! Defend yourself lest I strike you dead at my feet!" cried Lord Montire, white with passion.

Hugh Trevor folded his arms and bent his head, as though awaiting the blow. Perhaps he, too, wished for instant annihilation.

"Defend yourself, sir, or——" shouted the enraged husband, as he lifted the heavy walking-stick he carried, and aimed a blow at the still bent head.

"Hold!" cried a stern voice, whilst a firm hand held back the uplifted arm. "Would you slay a defenceless man? He is no betrayer—he is my affianced lover."

"Ah—is that so?" asked Lord Montire, regarding Lucy with an incredulous stare.

But her attitude and noble womanly bearing appealed to the best instincts of his manhood.

He was silenced, but not convinced. Casting a withering look of scorn and loathing on Hugh Trevor, he turned on his heel and left them together.

"How noble of you, Lucy," exclaimed Hugh, advancing a step towards her. "You do not despise me? Oh, say you forgive me."

"What I have done I have done to save my sister's good name and a justly incensed husband from a fearful crime," replied she in a cold, stern voice. "But there are some things a woman cannot forgive, and that is betrayal and disgrace."

"As I live, I am no betrayer—that I love Elova it is useless to deny, but she is as innocent as an angel of light; I love her too well to couple her name with dishonor."

"I am willing to believe you; still it was cruel—unmanly—to lay yourself out to win the trust of one woman, to cover your love for another, and that other the wife of your friend. Would that my eyes alone had been opened, and the past could be buried in oblivion. I shall henceforth regard you as my sister's evil genius and avoid you with shuddering abhorrence." She turned from him as she uttered the last sentence and walked quickly away without one word of farewell.

And Elova, what of her? Ah, poor broken flower! She crept away to the shelter of her own room like a wounded animal. There was but one wish in her heart—that was to die.

Oh, the weary hours of that never-ending night that followed. Her brain was too dull with mental anguish even to think.

Towards morning she at last fell into a troubled slumber, only to awaken to a more acute sense of her misery.

Then a feverish desire to know and face the worst took possession of her mind. She must see her husband—anything was preferable to this terrible suspense.

She rang for breakfast. Something in her maid's face aroused her dormant energies. She had not fallen so low as to brook a menial's inquiring look.

To eat, however, was impossible. She arose, took a cold plunge and dressed herself with care; then with trembling footsteps descended the stairs and entered the morning room. The house appeared silent and deserted. For the first time she wondered why Lucy had not been near her since yesterday. Had she too thrust her aside like a moral leper?

The thought had barely crossed her mind when the door opened and her husband stood before her.

"So—you are still here. I had hoped you would have spared yourself the humiliation of being told to go forth from the home you have dishonored," he said in hard, pitiless tones, with a look of cruel contempt.

"As heaven is my witness, you wrong me. I have been weak, foolish, but not wicked," she cried, aroused to defend herself by this needless harshness.

"Ah! And you would have me believe you, after what I witnessed yesterday?"

She was silenced. She seemed to feel the deep abasement of being thrust aside by the man she loved, rather than the cruel taunts of her husband.

"It is needless to prolong this interview. You do not sleep another night beneath this roof; and if you are wise, you will prepare to leave at once."

"Leave at once!" she echoed, with a wild, beseeching look. "What of the children? Surely you cannot mean to send me forth from the shelter of your roof?"

"You should have thought of your children, madame, before you lent a willing ear to a guilty love-tale. With my consent you will never see your children again; they left the house last evening under the care of Mrs. Marsden."

"Oh, heaven!" she cried; "my punishment is harder than I can bear. I will tell you I am innocent of any great offence—have you no pity? Will you not spare?"

"I will spare you in so far that whilst you remain here the servants shall obey you as their mistress. You can order the carriage to take you to what destination you please; but once the door of Beechhurst is closed behind you, you must never cross the threshold again."

She rose up and looked proudly at him. His words had wounded her sharper than a two-edged sword. Was she fallen so low that the servants would refuse to obey her commands at a sign from their master? She would entreat no further.

"If you refuse me the shelter of your house, on your head will rest the sin and the shame. You have been cruel and pitiless. I had rather face death in any form than live on as a dishonored wife beneath your roof. Some day you will remember that I swore to you, before high heaven, I never wronged you." She moved towards the door with a firm step, opened it and went out, without once looking back.

The butler was standing in the hall, with a guilty look on his face as though he had been almost caught in the act of listening at the door.

Lady Montire's eyes flashed fire as she regarded him with a haughty stare. "Go and tell my groom to saddle Sultan and be round at the door in half an hour, please," she said, in a curt tone of command, as she began to ascend the stairs.

She had no set purpose in view. She was too stunned even to think; in an aimless sort of way she proceeded to the nursery, as was her daily custom.

How desolate and deserted it looked; books and toys scattered about in wild disorder, as though the occupants had made a rapid flight and left their household gods behind them.

Was it by accident or design that a card lay on the table addressed, "Mrs. Marsden, Sleaford?"

Ah, it must be that the children were taken to Sleaford. She would go to them. There was a rift in the cloud, a ray of hope. She went to her room and began to prepare for her ride. She would not ring for her maid, she would not bear any eye to note the drawn white face reflected in the mirror.

It did not take her long to slip into her riding habit; she had even put on her hat and gloves when she saw the groom coming round from the stables. In her haste to avoid the prying eyes of the domestics, she almost ran downstairs. The butler, however, was already in the hall. He opened the door, followed her down the steps, and held the horse's head for her to mount.

"Sultan is rather fresh, my lady," said the groom respectfully; "if your ladyship will allow me, I'll change the saddle on to your ladyship's mare in no time."

Sultan was certainly restive, and showed the whites of the eyes rather more than most riders would have cared to see.

"Oh, I don't mind; Sultan will answer my purpose all the better for a long ride; it is eighteen miles to Sleaford, is it not?"

"Nearly twenty, my lady, unless we cross the downs."

"Then we will cross the downs. Sultan won't be quite so fresh when I arrive at Sleaford."

She sprang lightly into the saddle, gathered up the reins and in another moment was cantering down the drive.

Lord Montire, like many another angry man, felt his conscience troubled after he had poured out the vials of his wrath on the devoted head of his wife. He began to doubt the justice of his high-handed proceedings, and almost wished he had not gone so far; still he was too proud to own himself in fault and recall his words.

Hearing horses cantering down the drive, he went to the window and looked out, when, all in a moment, he experienced a complete revulsion of purpose. He rushed from the room and out into the hall in a state of high excitement, shouting: "Elova, Elova, come back!" But she had already ridden out of hearing. He shouted and called on her to come back in vain.

When a turn in the drive hid her from view he turned furiously on the astonished butler and demanded who had dared saddle Sultan for her ladyship.

"The horse was saddled by her ladyship's orders, may it please you, my lord. Simmons did venture to tell my lady he wor a bit fresh, but her ladyship said a ride to Sleaford would take it out o' un."

"Dolt——"

The butler turned pale. Was it possible—did his lordship call him a dolt?

"Go instantly and order Parsons to saddle her ladyship's mare and ride after her—but stay, I will write a note for him to give to her ladyship if he overtakes her. Let there be no delay; Sultan is too dangerous a horse for a lady to ride, and how that dolt of a groom dared to put his lady's saddle on that vicious beast I cannot imagine."

The note was written, and the groom sent post haste after his mistress, within the space of a few minutes after she left the park.

"Heaven grant it may not be too late!" ejaculated the now penitent husband as he went back to the library and sank down in a chair.

The love that had been held back and repressed, now asserted full sway in his breast.

He had never realized how much he loved his wife until he feared she was gone from him forever.

His eyes were opened, as though scales had fallen from them, to his own shortcomings and neglect of his young wife's best interests.

"What had he done?" he asked himself with bitter reproach, "to shield her from evil, or to win her confidence?"

Ah, if she only came back to him, he would guard her for the future as the apple of his eye—he would forgive and forget everything. But would she forgive and forget the insults he had heaped on her head since yesterday?

Why had she ordered Sultan to be saddled for her instead of her own mare? His heart stood still with unnamed dread as he asked himself this question.

The horse was quite unfit for a lady to ride, the least flap of a habit in the wind would cause the animal to bolt and become unmanageable; and knowing this she had ordered the vicious animal to be saddled for her use.

It would take pages to relate the self-torture he endured during the weary hours that followed. Unless the groom reached his mistress before she arrived on the downs, it might be too late to prevent a terrible catastrophe!

The house had been strangely silent all that afternoon—as silent as though the angel of death had already entered. But, hist—what sound was that?

No one who has heard that dull heavy sound can mistake it for any other.

His knees trembled as he rose up slowly and went towards the entrance hall.

Ah, alas! He met the country doctor, aided by the servants, bearing the inanimate form of his wife across the threshold.

As they laid her gently on a couch she opened her eyes and fixed them on her husband who was bending over her.

Oh, the wild beseeching look that came into those dark expressive orbs, he will never forget to his dying day.

Her lips moved, and he bent his ear to listen. "They have only brought me home to die—have pity, and spare me ——" her voice choked, tears filled her eyes.

"Do not speak of dying—they shall bear you instantly to your chamber, and I myself will nurse you back to life!" he cried deeply moved.

A glad light came into her eyes; she made an effort to raise her head—but the cold hand of death was already laid on her; with a low moan she fell back—and all was over.

Yes; all was over! There was nothing left now for that stern, relentless man but never-dying remorse. He had sent her forth to her doom.

Yet all the world ever knew of this sad domestic tragedy was, that as Lady Montire was riding across the downs to Sleaford, to visit her children, who had been sent there for change of air, her horse took fright, and dashing madly onward towards a steep declivity, had stumbled and fallen over. In the fall the hapless lady was injured so fearfully that she died shortly after she was [illegible] to Beechhurst.

Have the courage to cut [illegible] acquaintance you have [illegible] are convinced that he lacks principle [illegible] with his infirmities, but not [illegible]

At Home and Abroad.

Gutta-percha does not appeal to most people as an article of diet, but there is a small—and exceedingly small—submarine crustacean that positively delights in it. This interesting creature is called the "gribble," and seems to enjoy making a meal on the gutta-percha used for the sheathing of submarine cables.

The dogs in the Belgian Ardennes are wonderful animals. Two or three are harnessed to a cart, and they fly along the roads with a kind of fussy speed that is almost amusing to watch. When they arrive at their destination they squat down on the ground, and are much pleased with a little admiration, sugar, or any other acceptable morsel. Recently a Belgian landlord drove four horses in a race with one of his farmers against four yellow dogs, and the race was easily won by the dogs, much to the delight of their blue-blooded master.

Some English clergymen have consented to have the electrophone fitted in their churches. Aged and ailing people will no longer be debarred from hearing the church service and sermon, for with the aid of the electrophone they may listen undisturbed, even if prostrate in bed, to every word spoken or sung in the church connected. During certain Sundays the electrophone company arranges hearings from various churches at their offices, when it is possible to alternately listen to a great number of clergymen preaching.

A tea-party was recently given in one of the fashionables circles of Paris by phosphorescent light. It took place after dusk, and no artificial lamps were used —only the light from phosphorescent materials on the floor, furniture, pictures, teacups, and flowers. We may tell at the same time of another curiosity of this sort, but rather more useful, in the shape of a "luminous cat," intended to frighten away mice. It is simply the form of a cat stamped out of sheet metal and painted with luminous or phosphorescent paint, so as to shine in the dark.

The Turk of to-day is noted for the prodigious quantity of tobacco which he consumes. Instead of leading the world as a connoisseur of tobacco, the Turk, a few centuries ago, was a violent opponent of its introduction. The first smokers in Turkey were subject to the most severe punishment. The Sultan prohibited its use. Tobacco users in Turkey, not being able to indulge in the weed through smoking some of those who had acquired a taste for it devised the method of taking it through the nose in the form of a fine powder. Smokers were even threatened with death, flogged, and otherwise punished most severely for using the weed, the only effect of which seemed to be to stimulate the appetite for the forbidden herb.

The sewers of Paris are among the sights which venturesome visitors to the gay metropolis desire to see. Boats are used in the larger tunnels which are about ten feet high and eighteen feet wide, with a channel in the floor, forming a canal ten feet wide and three feet six inches deep, along which the sewerage flows. On smaller branches the canal is less than four feet wide, and cars are employed with flanged wheels running on the edges of the channel, which act as rails. The primary object of boats and cars is to drag scrapers for cleaning the channel. The cars and boats are now both propelled by electricity derived from accumulators carried in the leading vessel of the train of boats, which, in busy times, consists of six vessels, accommodating as many as 60 persons. As the boats have neither screws nor paddles, on account of stirring up the liquid sewerage, they are propelled by picking up a chain laid along the bottom of the channel, and passing over a driving pulley geared to the motor.

There is more Catarrh in this section of the country than all other diseases put together, and until the last few years was supposed to be incurable. For a great many years doctors pronounced it a local disease, and prescribed local remedies, and by constantly failing to cure with local treatment, pronounced it incurable. Science has proven catarrh to be a constitutional disease, and therefore requires constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, is the only constitutional cure on the market. It is taken internally in doses from 10 drops to a teaspoonful. It acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. They offer one hundred dollars for any case it fails to cure. Send for circulars and testimonials. Address F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, O. Sold by Druggists, 75c.

Our Young Folks.

ON A COMET.

BY A. E. B.

WELL, it happened in this way:—I was in the field minding the wurzels and turnips, when I came upon a young chap lying dead as I thought upon the ground. Near him were the shreds of a dressing-gown, a broken pair of spectacles, a shoe, a battered steeple-shaped hat, and a lot of buttons.

The things smelled of fire, and looked as if they'd been burned and scorched. I was sorry to see the young chap, you may be sure, for I've five small nippers of my own, which goes far to make a body feel tender-like. So I took him up in my arms as carefully as I could, and carried him off to the hospital.

"No," they told me there, "he isn't dead but badly damaged."

It chirped me up a bit, that did, and I went back to the field, and returned with my arms full of dressing-gown, buttons and things, which I took to the look-up, and told the superintendent how I'd found them.

A week or two later I heard from the hospital folks that the young chap was getting better, and so Polly Ann—that's my missis, you know—she says to me, "You'd better go and see him."

"Well," I said, "I don't know but what I will."

When I went into the ward where he was lying in bed, I really shouldn't have known him, for they'd shaved off all his hair, he being light-headed.

"Well," I said, wishing to cheer him up, "so you aren't dead, as I expected, after dropping from the sky, or wherever it was you came from?"

He gave a faint smile. "You're about right there," says he; "I'd been skylarking, and no mistake, all along of a gay deceiver. But I don't intend to, never no more," said he.

"Maybe you'd like to hear all about it? I'm Freddy's brother," he says, "whose adventures have been printed, as perhaps you know. I'm the one that was in the quarry business. I can't talk much at a time; but there, you drop in now and then; it'll do me good to have your company," he says; "for, to tell the truth, it's somewhat lonesome-like, lying here all day."

"All right," I says to him, "I'll come."

When I got home, I told Polly Ann, my missis, and she says to me, "Hodge," she says, "you should write it all down, and maybe it'll be printed—who knows?" says she.

So I rubbed my chin and thought it over, and then I says to her, "You're more of a scholar than what I am, do you write it down just as I tell you."

"All right," she says, "I will."

So this is the story that the young chap told me; but, mind you, whether his being light-headed had muddled his ideas, I must leave you to judge, as I don't know, nor Polly Ann, my missis.

"I had taken a stroll up among the hills just to stretch my legs a bit, so to say. It was a lone-lorn place, and there wasn't another two-legged mother's son in sight.

"I happened to look round and crane my neck to view the landscape o'er, when long into me there comes a feather-ing old bowfin, and knocks me clean off my pins. Ha, ha! I was even with him, for if I went one way he went another, and we were both on our backs and sprawling.

"We picked ourselves up and sat there glaring at each other; and then I grinned like a Cheshire cat, for the old guy cut such a comical figure!

"He was togged out in a long, loose dressing-gown and patent pumps, and a wonderful hat, and held a spy-glass and all. Well, there, I laughed, I did, till the tears rolled down my cheeks!

"That seemed to get his anger up, and he says to me, says he, 'Who are you a-kidding of?' 'You jump about and wash your face,' he says.

"I should be happy to accommodate you," I says, "but you've gone and knocked all the nimps clean out of me!"

"After that the old Johnny toned down a bit, and he and I got quite so-ciable. He had me beat for size, as anyone can see, but I'm no scrub that he can knock over with a few words. I lay [illegible] and he asked me if I could [illegible]

"Easy enough, I answered with a merry laugh.

"Ah, ah, quite right, and the modern improvements, electric lighting, telephones, X rays business," he says; "could you take the helm of such a craft as that?"

"Well," I says, cautious-like, "I've had some experience in steering, for I've held the wheel on board Uncle Samson's steam-tug 'Tommy Dod' when the 'raging seas did roar, and the stormy wind did blow,' as the poet says, so I'd be willing to try."

"All right," says the astrologer, says he, jumping up, "now for the comet."

"And where might it be?" I asked him.

"Come along," says he, "and I'll show you."

"After we'd gone a bit further, he outs with his spy-glass and tells me to look. I did, and saw a chasm with whopping big rocks on either hand; a river flowed between, and away in the distance was a curved white band of light, which he told me was the comet."

"Now," says he, "we've only got to clamber up to the tip-top of the highest rock, leap from it on to the comet, and there we are!"

"Oh, indeed," says I, "is that all?"

"Well, 'twas such stiff climbing, that it began to get dusk as we neared the top; but when we got there at last, there was the comet plain as a pike-staff, whereupon the old josser got quite excited. "There she is!" said he, waving his steeple-hat. "Comet, ahoy!"

"Tally-ho! Stop thief! Fire!" I yelled, not to be behind him. "But how are we to board the craft?" says I.

"Take fast hold of my hand," says he, "keep cool, and when I say One, two, three, off—jump like a ring-tailed roarer!" says he.

"My stars, that was a jump and no mistake! Between you and me, we should have been about dead for want of wind if it hadn't been for the attraction of the comet. Directly we left Mother Earth, you know, it gave us a kind of pull, and so we landed on it in a couple of shakes. Safe and sound? Oh yes! We fell into soft warm lava; and then and there me and old steeple-hat stretched ourselves out, and were soon fast asleep."

"I had scarcely opened my eyes in the morning, when I heard the watch sing out "Land on the starboard bow!

"I was on my pins in a twinkling, and so was the old gentleman. He looked at the chart, and says he 'Mars—that's about the size of it!'

"Keep her head a point to the windward?" roared the captain. "Stop her! Back her!"

And we fetched up alongside the planet Mars in a seaman-like manner, beautiful to behold!

"Now then, who's for the shore?" says the skipper, says he; "you've got just twenty minutes," says he, looking at his watch, "so make the most of it!" And on shore we went.

What was it like? Well, it seemed to be a land of waving palms, and cities with lordly terraces and dome-crowned buildings. You can believe it or not, but all the folks were kings and queens, so we were in good company, I can tell you.

There were no railways, and not a horse to be seen, or even a Jerusalem pony; but the people rode about on birds. Maybe you've read in the "Arabian Nights" of the enormous wild fowl called the roc?

Well, this was its old home, its happy hunting-ground, until the Marsites took to rearing poultry.

These birds are now as well trained as if they attended boarding-school, and a trip through the air is awfully jolly. Difficult to catch? Oh, no! If you're anything of a judge of fowls, you just pick out your bird, catch it by putting salt on its tail, slip a bridle in its beak, jump on its back—and there you are.

We yearned to fly over so far, but there! what can you do when your twenty minutes is up, and your comet's skipper is shouting "All aboard"?

Back we had to go, the gangway was removed, the whistle sounded, and we were soon careering through space again, at the rate of two miles a minute.

When it began to grow a bit dark, the old boy got out his spy-glass and was very busy viewing the starry heavens.

He took a heap of pains trying to point out to me a couple of bears—for so he'd call them—a great one and a little one; and then—let's see!—yes, there was a ram and a bull, and a whale and a lion, and a heap of other creatures; but though my eyes bulged, and I fairly cricked me neck with trying, I must confess I could not see them as plainly as I could have wished.

"Oh," says the old party, says he, "you lack the eye of experience and the wings of faith!"

"Well," I answered him, "maybe perhaps I do: my sight's A1," I says, "but my shoulder-blades are as bare as Sarah's Desert!"

And now a thought occurred to me. The more I turned it over and over, the more I was struck with the idea, that if we could but manage to collect these creatures—many of which I'd never even heard of before—put them in a show so as to make a kind of Zoo, and teach them to jump through hoops and point out the letters of the alphabet, our fortunes were as good as made.

But there!—"the best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley." You may think it strange, but it's nevertheless true, that I was so set on my blooming plans, that it was only now that I noticed how hot 'twas getting; and when I mentioned my feelings to old steeple-hat, I found that he was quite in a blue mood about it, but tried to explain it scientifically.

"Yes," he says, "we've got a head wind, you see, which blows all the heat aloft the funnel."

I'd had my suspicions for some time past as to this gentleman's real knowledge of the comet business, and I now took the opportunity of asking the helmsman where we were going.

"The sun," he answers pat, "the sun of course; but," he says, "you are requested not to speak to the man at the wheel!"

The sun! Geswillikins! we were lost indeed.

Frightened? Not me! A man who's been erupted from a volcano isn't easily frightened. But the old boy was, and no mistake, for he pointed his shaking finger first at the helmsman and then at the captain, and behold you! they were so bright that they shone again.

Well, I just peeped over the bulwarks, and there was the great face of the sun, showing like a blazing furnace, from which, every now and again, there darted upwards flames of fire, with a rumbling and rattling noise. The lava deck beneath our feet grew hotter and hotter, and threatened to melt.

"Oh, jiminy! there's no time to be lost," says I to old steeple-hat, who was now half-wild with fright, "we must jump for our lives!"

And jump we did, like gone coons, without waiting for one, two, three; and the last thing I heard was the voice of the skipper as he sang out "Man overboard!"

After that, I might have been dead and buried for ages, for all I felt. Then suddenly I heard voices as in a dream, and woke from a long sleep, to find myself alive, but not kicking, in the hospital. As to the astrologer—as he called himself—I don't know what became of him; and to speak plainly, I don't much care.

* * * * * * *

This is the tale that the young chap told to me, and that Polly Ann—my missis—wrote it down; but whether he was trying to make fun of me, or was light-headed, or was speaking "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," I must, as I said before, leave you to judge.

ENJOYED IT.—Animals, even the most unlikely, at times show themselves capable of enjoying any amount of fun and amusement, and from the pig to the elephant have given expression to their huge enjoyment of a practical joke—played off on other animals—the former giving an unmistakable grunt of satisfaction, while in the case of the elephant its sides will literally shake with enjoyment.

One of the latest instances of animals amusing and enjoying themselves has been related by the owner of an old-fashioned mill in Warren County, Virginia. His mill is runs by means of a very large wheel, turned by the water of a brook after the style common in this country a century ago. He breeds ducks which swim on the brook just above the mill dam.

A few weeks ago he saw a large drake flying through the air on the wheel of the mill, and expected to see it dashed to pieces as the wheel turned round, but the drake understood what he was about, and, adapting himself to his position, when it struck the water he went underneath, coming up and catching onto the next paddle. The wheel was stopped, and the drake swam away with joyful quacks at, it was supposed, his escape.

The next day the same drake was riding the wheel, evidently thoroughly enjoying the sensation. He was driven away, but the following morning he returned, accompanied by a number of others prepared to enjoy the fun, and the owner's amusement may be imagined when he found, as the wheel turned, it had a duck on every paddle.

The World's Events.

It is illegal to practise hypnotism in Belgium.

The number of persons born blind averages 6 in every 1,000,000.

It is said that the Greenland whale sometimes attains the age of 400 years.

The Danes were the first to abolish slavery in their West Indian possessions.

In all the great capitals of Europe, save London, some theatres are subsidised.

Less than one-tenth of the arable land of the Russian Empire is under cultivation.

Vinegar is mentioned in the Egyptian records as a medicine in the tenth century B. C.

A flowering plant is said to abstract from the soil 330 times its own weight in water.

A mechanical device, recently patented, pastes paper labels on 100,000 tins in ten hours.

According to figures and statistics, the wars of the past forty years have blotted out 2,760,000 lives.

The giraffe is the only animal who is really dumb—unable to express itself by any sound whatever.

The Republic of Uruguay has more newspapers in proportion to its population than any country in the world.

It takes eight times the strength to go upstairs that is required to accomplish the same distance on a level.

A million acres of forest are cut down every year to supply European railway companies with sleepers on which the lines are laid.

In Austria every newspaper appearing more than twice a month has to deposit caution money if politics are treated or mentioned.

The Japanese propose to erect a great monument, built of iron and similar to the Eiffel Tower, in commemoration of their victories.

Unbreakable mirrors are now being made by putting a coat of quicksilver on the back of a thin sheet of celluloid instead of on glass.

Grasshoppers attain their greatest size in South America, where they grow to a length of five inches, and their wings spread out ten inches.

Carmen Sylva, the Queen of Roumania, has written it is said, opera librettos in four languages—French, German, Swedish and Roumanian.

The willow is one of the most adaptable of plants. A willow switch stuck in the wet ground will almost invariably take root and grow up into a tree.

In Mexico and Siam judge, jury, and lawyers all smoke in court, if they wish it, while a case is being heard. Even the prisoner is not deprived of his cigar or cigarette.

A defender of English sparrows comes forth with the plea that, inasmuch as they feed on seeds of waste plants and weeds, they are a positive benefit to the farmer.

The word coolie, or kholee, is East Indian, and means mixed race, forming two-thirds of the population of Gujerat; but the name is given indifferently to any Indian porter or laborer.

No cycle is carried on a Russian railway unless the tool-wallet is removed. This regulation is due to the fact that on one occasion a cyclist left in his wallet a revolver, which went off and injured a railway employe.

A scheme for a Women's Theatre is now on foot in Paris. This theatre will produce plays by feminine authors only, or such as are written by men and have for their avowed object the advocacy of women's rights.

Indiarubber, in spite of its growing scarcity and expense, is meeting with favor abroad as a paving for streets. It is said to be perfectly noiseless, unaffected by heat or cold, and less slippery and more durable than asphalt.

Public school teachers in San Francisco are required to join a pension association. Each will pay one dollar a month into the treasury, and will be allowed to retire after thirty years' service with an annuity of six hundred dollars a year.

One of the newest paying professions is said to be that of a trunk-packer. In many of the large trunk shops you can hire a man who will pack your trunk artistically, folding expensive gowns and other garments in tissue-paper, and stowing away delicate articles in the safest way.

The universities of Gottingen and Jena are in close competition for the double honor of being the centre of German student duelling. In spite of contradictions it is reiterated that in Gottingen hardly a day passes that a duel is not fought. Jena once stars twelve duels with more or less serious results were fought there within twenty-four hours. The record of Jena is twenty-one within the same length of time.

THE BRAVE.

BY COLLINS.

How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall press a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

THE CUBANS AND CUBA.

The reluctance Spain must feel at the idea of losing Cuba in the present struggle may even be inferred from the many endearing titles which the home country has bestowed upon it. Thus they call it "The Pearl of the Antilles," "The Eden of the West," and "The Ever-faithful Isle"—though the last appellation can certainly no longer be applied to it.

The first landmark which strikes the traveler who approaches Havana from the sea is the grim outline of the Morro, or fort, which guards the entrance to the harbor. The Morro, which is also used as a prison, has stood many a siege by the French, Dutch, and British, and capitulated to the latter power in the year 1762.

Havana is a fine city; for, though it does not contain many striking buildings, there is an air of luxury and well-being about it that suggests flush times, and there is probably no part of the Spanish dominions where money is more plentiful in times of peace. It is—or was until recently—the greatest market in the world for at least two great staples, sugar and tobacco. The fame of Havana tobacco is such that the prices obtained for it are out of all proportion to the labor involved in its cultivation and manufacture, and enable the fortunate Cubans, in a sense, to levy a tax on the world's commerce.

Tobacco factories are numerous, and skilled workmen well paid; while soldiers and others who have plenty of spare time realize a considerable amount of pocket-money by the manufacture of cigarettes, which they prepare in small packets, these in their turn being arranged in large bundles, called from their shape wheels, and sold to the tobacco factories.

In many buildings the doorkeeper may be observed at work making cigarettes for sale. He has a table before him on which lies a large pile of tobacco, which he rolls into square slips of rice-paper with a dexterity acquired by long practice. On one of his fingers he wears a small metal cap like a thimble, which is used to thrust into the ends of the cigarettes and close them with the ends of the enwrapping paper, for this is the manner in which they are generally sold locally.

Havana was formerly a walled city, and though the walls have long since been destroyed—only traces of them now remaining—it is still the custom to refer to the city as "within" and "without" the walls. The portion within the walls comprises the old city, with its narrow streets, which is still the business quarter, though fine new streets and boulevards mark the newer portion of the city. One of the principal streets is the Calle O'Reilly, so named after a former captain-general. It may be noted that Irish names are not uncommon in the records of the Spanish army, and bear witness to the extensive emigration which took place from Ireland several centuries ago, especially during the time of Cromwell.

The people of Havana are pleasure-loving and fond of luxury. There are several theatres, in which good companies perform, the most notable being the Tacon. This theatre, which was until recently the largest in the Western Hemisphere, was built by convict labor. Externally it has no architectural pretensions, but the interior is commodious and luxuriously appointed, the stalls and boxes rising in five tiers one above the other. Between the acts the audience will come out and promenade along the adjacent avenues and boulevards, which are gaily lighted and filled by a well-dressed and well-mannered crowd.

On some nights the band plays in the centre of the square opposite the Tacon Theatre, and here fashionable society will assemble in the cool of the evening to meet and converse, promenading in evening dress under the leafy avenues, or sitting in the chairs which are provided for the public and rented for a small amount.

In the southern part of the island a large amount of fruit—principally bananas—is grown for export to the United States. All tropical fruits abound; oranges, mangoes, guavas, pine-apples, and many others. One which deserves special mention is the alligator pear, so called from its shape, though it is not a pear at all but an entirely different fruit. It is six to eight inches in length, and contains a stone about an inch in diameter enclosed in a rich yellow pulp. In the West Indies, where butter is dear and bad, this pulp is sometimes used as a substitute; and concerning this the following story may be told: A planter inquired of a friend if it was true that he had discharged his bookkeeper. "Why, yes," he replied; "I found that he used to eat butter with his bread, and a man who eats butter during the pear season, on the salary that he had, cannot be honest."

It was our lot, says a correspondent, to take a journey in a Spanish steamer from Santiago in the south to Havana in the north, touching at a number of intermediate ports. The steamer was very dirty, as may be imagined when it is said that she carried cattle for the Havana market. The cattle were hoisted on board by means of a steam winch lifting a rope fastened round their horns, a proceeding which they took quite quietly, and seemed to regard as a matter of course.

GOOD AND BAD ACTION.—An hour of vice is as long as an hour of virtue; but the difference between good and bad actions is infinite. Good actions, though they diminish our time here as well as bad actions, still lay up for us a happiness in eternity, and will recompense what they take away by a plentiful return at last. When we trade with virtue, we do but buy pleasure at the expense of time. So it is not so much a consuming of time as an exchange. As a man sows his corn, he is content to wait awhile, that he may, at the harvest, receive with advantage.

Grains of Gold.

Habits grow stronger in indulgence.

Content is the true philosopher's stone.

Great virtues are as necessary to sustain good fortune as bad.

There are many of the greatest deeds done in the small struggles of life.

Pride conceals our own faults, but multiplies prodigiously the faults of others.

Life's pleasures, if not abused, will be new every morning and fresh every evening.

Kindness in the heart is like rose-leaves in a drawer, sweetening every object around.

We do not easily discover our own faults; the clearest eyes do not see the cheeks below, nor the brow above.

Femininities.

The first indication of domestic happiness is the love of one's home.

It is beauty's privilege to kill Time; and, in revenge, Time kills beauty.

Overheard—"Mrs. Devere-Hawkins is a widow, is she not?" "Temporarily."

Young people always like to have a "Lovers' Lane," intersected with plenty of bridal paths.

A young lady contends that corsets, although unhealthy, are economical in that they prevent waist.

To keep husbands and boys from straying away from home, make home pleasanter than any other place.

Clara: Why on earth did she marry him? Was it because he was her last chance? May: No. I fancy it was because he was her first.

In Sweden and Norway a marriage cannot legally take place until the contracting parties each produce a vaccination certificate.

Husband: You look splendid in that hat. Wife: You always discover I look splendid when the time comes for me to have a new one.

"Your daughter has a great many admirers." "Oh, yes; she puts nearly all her window curtains on the rods with her old engagement rings."

Parisian lady cyclists are never at a loss for new and daring styles. The latest in this direction is the wearing of knickerbockers and short socks.

Kate: How did you get Tom to propose to you, dear? Mary: I told him that you were madly in love with him, and were determined to have him at any cost, dearest.

"You seem to regard a proposal as an every-day affair," he said. "Well, no—scarcely that," she replied. "Every other day. I never give my answer the same day."

In ancient days the precept was "Know thyself." In modern times it has been supplanted by the far more fashionable maxim, "Know thy neighbor, and everything about her."

No French bride will ever consent to wear pearls on her wedding-day, as the saying goes that pearls mean tears in her married life; nor will she marry on Sunday, that day being considered most unlucky.

"He's your first cousin, isn't he?" said Mrs. Dimling to six-year-old Freddy, alluding to a new baby of whom Freddy was very fond. "Oh, no," replied Freddy. "I had two cousins before he was born."

The importance of admitting the light of the sun freely to all parts of our dwellings cannot be too highly estimated. Indeed, perfect health is nearly as much dependent on pure sunlight as it is on pure air.

A young lady being engaged to be married, and getting sick of the bargain, applied to a friend to help her to untie the knot before it was too late. "Oh, certainly," he replied, "it's very easy to untie it now, while it's a beau."

Upholsterer: Madam, this is a fine reception chair. Our latest design. Try it, please. Mrs. Society: Dear me! how uncomfortable it is! I couldn't sit in it for five minutes. Upholsterer: That's it exactly, madam. You see, it is intended for callers.

One of the beauties of the court of Frederick the Great said to the king, "Sire, how is it that you, who are so illustrious already, still seek for additional fame?" "Madame," he replied, "for the same reason that you, although so beautiful, still wear rouge."

If a Parisian lady wishes to show special grace and favor to a valued cook or chambermaid who gets married while in her employ, she can grant no kindness that will be more highly appreciated than the loan of one of her carriages to figure in the bridal procession.

A young lady, possessing more vanity than personal charms, remarked, in a jesting tone, but with an earnest glance, that "she traveled on her good looks." A rejected lover being present, said he "could now account for the young lady's never having been found far from home."

A pure silk fabric burns somewhat like wool, and emits in burning a similar odor to wool or a hot shoe when applied to a horse's hoof. It burns with a flame, leaving a black carbonaceous ash. Weighted silks will not burn in the same way. They contain such a large proportion of metallic salts that the combustion is quite different.

The Queen Regent of Spain has a marriageable daughter on her hands. Mercedes, Princess of the Asturias, is now seventeen, and propositions for her hand have already been considered at the Spanish court. For six months before the birth of the King, Mercedes, who was named for the first wife of her father, was queen of Spain. But Alphonso XIII appeared on the scene, and she was given a back seat.

Masculinities.

Excessive coffee-drinking, it is said, impairs the sight.

Cheek wins in this world, especially if the cheek is dimpled and rosy.

It is a peculiar belief in Spain that a stork's egg is a certain cure for habitual intemperance.

An inveterate old bachelor says that ships are called "she" because they always keep a man on the look-out.

The married man who interrupts while his wife is giving him a curtain lecture only delays the time of his going to sleep.

Good nature, like a bee, collects its honey from every herb. Ill nature, like a spider, sucks poison from the sweetest flowers.

Give to a grief a little time, and it softens to a regret, and grows beautiful at last; and we cherish it as we do some old, dim picture of the dead.

A lawyer recently went into the surf to bathe, and encountered a huge shark. Their eyes met for an instant, when the shark blushed and swam out.

Stranger: And so you believe in Professor Chloride's cure for drunkenness? Red-nosed enthusiast: Believe in it! How can I help believing in it? I've been cured six times.

He is the greatest man who chooses the right with invincible resolution, who bears the heaviest burdens cheerfully, and whose reliance on truth and virtue is the most unfaltering.

King William I. introduced horse-shoeing into England; and six horse shoes are on the coat-of-arms of the man to whom he gave vast estates for caring for his horses in this way.

"Life is like a theatre, in this respect—that, although during the performance we hold higher and lower places, we all mix in one common stream when the masque is over, and we go home."

If it takes a boy twenty-five minutes to cut three sticks of wood to boil the kettle, how long will it take him next morning to walk three miles in the country to meet a circus coming to town?

"There!" said Miss Dashie, as she sealed a letter addressed to her lover; "that isn't very bright, but it will do for him. Lovers are alike. If you only write to them, they don't care what you say."

A painter, who was well acquainted with the dire effects of law, had to represent two men—one who had gained a lawsuit, and another who had lost one. He painted the former with a shirt on, and the latter naked.

Remarked the young man in swelling tones. "I'm an agnostic." Elderly gentleman: "And what is an agnostic?" Fresh youth: "An agnostic is a fellow who isn't sure of anything." Elderly gentleman: "I see; but how does it happen you are sure you are an agnostic?"

The poorest are not unfrequently the happiest. A Sultan who, as a cure for low spirits, was directed by his medical adviser to wear the shirt of the happiest man in his dominions, selected a gay and reckless fellow, but on stripping him for his shirt, found he didn't wear one.

Sir Walter Scott, meeting an Irish beggar in the street, who importuned him for sixpence, the Great Unknown, not having one, gave him a shilling, adding, with a laugh, "Mind now, sir, you owe me sixpence." "Och, sure enough," said the beggar, "and God grant you life till I pay you!"

St. Louis lost his hair in Palestine, and when Queen Blanca saw him thus denuded she was sorely vexed. However, she bethought herself of a remedy, which was to cut off a lock from the head of every courtier; these she sewed carefully together, and thus made the first wig!

"Confound it," exclaimed Jackson—"what a stupid fellow that jeweler is!" "How so?" inquired his friend. "Why, I told him the other day that I wanted engraved in the engagement ring the letters 'From A. to Z.' 'From Arthur to Zenobia, you know—and the idiot went to work and put in the whole alphabet!"

The affections of some men are like wells, stony on the outside, narrow yet deep within, not flowing forth like a river to seek souls far and near, to gladden God's earth; nor gushing up and around like a fountain in the sun, for all who seek them; but useful, notwithstanding, and very precious, each to some one individual or household.

"George William!" exclaimed the wife, with suppressed emotion, "I saw you leaving a saloon to-day." "Was anyone with me?" inquired the dereliet husband, complacently. "There was not," snapped the wife, biting her lips to control herself. "Then I hope you are now satisfied that I told the truth when I said I always leave saloons alone."

Latest Fashion Phases.

Most distinctive styles will mark the millinery of the fall and winter. The majority of hats are round, not very high, but broad, and recall a highly ornamental beret. A curious notion is that in many cases the velvet has been gathered, and then the stitches removed, so that it has the appearance of being puckered, for the lines remain just as if the threads were there.

The new notion in ribbons are the black and colored velours, and the basket-work weavings in self colors. Oriental brocades, well covering the whole surface of the ribbon, are appearing also, and shot glace ribbons with borders are well to the fore. Three shades appear in most of the examples, and terry effects are asserting themselves in many ways, both in ribbons and fabrics employed in millinery. Striped velvets and silk plaids in bright colors are to be employed too, and a good many stripes. Chenille will figure largely in ornamentation, and sequins.

A round blue toque, with a couple of pleated rows of lace at the edge and two large black ostrich feathers standing up, is not so original as a beaver-colored velvet with a round crown. One with feathers and osprey, ruffled velvet on the brim and silk gathered on cordings for the crown, was far more uncommon, for this, like all the rest, turned up at the side.

Many models on these lines are made in terry velvet, with a liberal display of chenille in the embroidery on the crowns. The pretty cerise shade takes a decided position in millinery this autumn, and a bonnet in this shade, with a stiff crown trimmed with steel sequins, is a capital example of the rest, but not quite so charming as a sky-blue border, surrounded, as it were, by two double gathered flounces of the velvet, the crown entirely covered with gold, turquoise, and opals. White feathers appeared on this also.

In a black velvet toque, the crown was gathered to a central button like the cap of a German student. It has a double scalloped brim of light blue velvet held in with large jet boules between the scallops, and cocks' feathers mingled with osprey at the side. We have not yet abandoned the picture hat, and one with a mauve velvet brim had a crown composed of glace mauve satin with upstanding gathered tucks of this material all over it; interspersed with this were rosettes on the top, and two feathers on the crown and one under.

A jeweled crown of the shape of the academic cap, in light green trimmed with white feathers, is quaint and pretty, but not so unique as a turban with no crown at all, composed of bright yellow velvet entwined with tulle, and a steel galon worked on canvas; an osprey at the side, intermixed with velvet bows. The real old boat-shaped hats are popular, the crown low and flat, and the brim turning up in front, generally covered with velvet or silk, the brim arranged like an arched coronet at the back, a bird with outstretched wings in the front.

Illustrative of the decidedly new modes is a toque of drawn violet velvet with a waved front entirely covered with steel. A cerise-red velvet toque with a low crown has the centre gathered in a circle, three loops standing up at the side intermixed with jet, and a series of circular puffings round the brim.

A great deal of light blue velvet will be worn during the autumn and winter; and on a pretty little close fitting bonnet black ostrich feathers have been treated in quite a unique manner. They are formed into tiny tips not much larger than a nickel, and turning downwards overlap each other, forming the trimming which entirely surrounds the bonnet, a couple of ram's-horn tips being place at the side.

There is a lovely new color like anemone, much prettier than magenta, and something between red peach and ruby. This has been employed for a pretty quilted bonnet, made after the Tam o' Shanter fashion, and a couple of feathers at the side.

A hat of black velvet, richly embroidered on the crown and gathered in a double row round the brim is trimmed with small fashionable rosettes, from which spring feathers, and one large bird with outstretched wings at the side.

The heron's feathers, not in their natural state, but made up in flat, wing-like trimming, are the newest introduction into the boat-shaped hat, starting in the front and resting on the back, and in quite the old style.

Mouse color is one of the favorite shades. A large circular toque in this of terry velvet has the brim cut up in three distinct battlements, velor antique gathered and drawn all over, which shows that the modes of the future are not those of to-day.

The milliners will have to accustom their hands to all this drawn tucking work and gathering, without which it appears that bonnets and toques and dressy hats will certainly not be up to date.

There is a redundancy of ornament in the way of feathers. Too many could hardly be crowded on to the sides of hats, toques, or bonnets, which is lamentable if all that has been written with regard to the cruelty exercised in procuring the osprey is really true.

It is a plain duty lying at the door of fashionable women to ascertain for themselves whether this be so or not. In hats, felts will be almost universal, with tailor-made gowns, and many are still to be seen with the high crowns, and some with the low flat ones.

There are to be seen felts in every variety of shade, not only in dark blue, dark green, brown, and kindred tints, but in the very lightest pinks, eau de Nil, brilliant reds, sky-blue, and biscuit color, which will doubtless be relieved by black velvet trimmings and black feathers, white and black plumes having the preference over all others except coq and owl, which are freely introduced on most of the felt models that aim at being as severely simple as the other kinds of millinery are ornamental.

There are a great many beautiful trimmings now preparing for lovely fronts in evening gowns. One of these is of white satin embroidered in pearls and emeralds, the emeralds very large and important, and the design conventionalized floral. Most of these fronts for skirts have also a piece for the full pouched bodice, treated in the same way. Another satin was worked in chenille, the design Wistarias intermixed with pearls, but instead of occupying the centre of the front breadth, it was carried down the off side, forming a square corner.

Many beautiful tabliers after this order have been prepared in a mixture of gold and steel, on lace braid work, while others show a combination of silver and jet or rather aluminium, which on the score of lightness is taking the place of silver, and also on account of another great virtue, viz., that it does not tarnish. Gold and silver is also blended in the embroidery with mother of pearl in large important pieces, which serve to produce very handsome patterns. Lovely embroidery is displayed on a front dress trimming, worked in silks, with dragon flies and orchids, spangled and beaded.

Net is a favorite material for the groundwork of the embroideries carried out in steel paillettes and beads, intermixed with pink coral, which is one of the great novelties of the moment, and this also is employed in large oval pieces, which, applied to the front of a bodice, stands out well from the figure.

Sometimes in one piece a great variety of treatment is introduced on the net foundation, such as gold beads and pink, blue, and black pearls, with turquoise and rubies. Pearls employed in embroidery are of all sizes and colors, and appear to be pressed by the finger into every shape.

Some graceful and delightful trimmings take the form of flowers in silk and paillettes united by embroidered bows, and very wonderful indeed are the heavier makes, in which the entire groundwork is formed of paillettes overlapping each other, the flowers standing out in bold relief, made by piling the paillettes one upon another until they stand up in the roses and chrysanthemums to the depth of half an inch. These look extremely well in jet and emerald-green paillettes.

Many of the best silk embroidery specimens are accompanied by silver cut sequins resembling jewels. Trimmings for Empire bodices worked on net, take the form of broad stripes in which large flowers in satin applique are emphasised by paillettes.

One of the most original works of art, however, are the white kid boleros, the foundation almost hidden by the mass of gold and many colored pearls, pink coral, emeralds and diamonds which are introduced into the Byzantine pattern. They are bold and daring, but look exceedingly well when made up, and are a good stand by in a wardrobe.

A pink satin dress was a real special delight, for its tint was of the loveliest, and the entire front of the skirt and bodice were worked with silver paillettes and lace, the intervening stripes carried across the material being formed of overlapping paillettes.

Oval diamond buckles seem to have superseded all others, and the narrow leather belts still remain prime favorites, some of them being encrusted with jewels.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Among pretty printed cottons for window curtains, cushions, and bedsteads are new blue ones with a good, effective bordering in white, or white with the willow pattern and others in blue. These cottons wash perfectly, and at small cost a country bedroom can be made to look very artistic.

White valances, worked in washing crewels, look very well with the colored curtains. Several of the old-fashioned white counterpanes are ornamented with bold floral designs in the centre and corners, with a trellis in pale gold color filling up the spaces, all in washing silks.

Smocked curtain bands in sateen or silk are somewhat of a novelty. They are made of a double piece, and have overcast loops at each end. They average nine inches in width, and the smocking occupies three inches down the middle.

It is much the fashion now to have colored silk bedspread and pillow covers with plain muslin cover, and frills of embroidered muslin, and the pillows in the shape of hearts.

Small pillows for the sofa are also in this shape, and some like large crackers, with deep lace at each end, tied round with satin ribbon and finished off with a bunch of loops. On the bedspread and pillow covers a large monogram is embroidered in white. On a sofa the two cushions—large and always negligently placed one half over the other—are of contrasting colors; and the footstool should be of one or of both colors. The newest cushions have a frill two inches wide only instead of the usual deep one.

Some fascinating work bags are made with parti-colored tasselled ends, a loose silk lining, and three to four inch ribbon drawstrings. The silk lining is attached to the bag only where the drawstring runners are, so that it stands up distinct from the bag, and has an excellent effect. A pretty cretonne or brocade or, indeed, any material may be used, but the lining and drawstring should always present a contrast. The lining is double at the neck.

The daintiest little string bags can be made of lengths of three-colored inch-wide ribbons sewn together, with a gilt sequin at the end of each. When the ball of string is fitted in and the drawstring pulled tight these ends fall over.

Babies' blankets, with cherubs' heads at the corners in outline stitch in pink or blue crewels, look pretty, with the edges undulating and overcast in the same color.

Busy fingers have lately been much engaged with covering cardboard boxes and miniature chests of drawers with thin brocade or artistic cretonne as receptacles for photos, lace, gloves, veils, and small odds and ends. The work is not difficult, but must be neatly done, and the whole is finished off with a fancy galoon.

Among the many pretty etceteras of fashions of the day may be ranked the tea cloths for afternoon gatherings. At some teas, the small tables set out about the rooms have white muslin cloths with deep lace flouncing, while at some late garden parties the cloths were of delicate colored and flowered muslin, with a frill of chiffon matching in tone, lightly caught up with a stitch here and there.

Fine linen with an insertion and edging of pillow lace, or a design embroidered in white thread; Swiss muslin, with colored ribbon run in and out of insertion, crossing and running round the cloth, with clustered loops at each corner, are popular, and so are others with a pattern in drawn thread all over them, or a scattered design of single violets, worked in washing thread or silk, with a group in each corner, the stalks being gold colored and without leaves.

The ordinary white tea cloths are often ornamented in this way, and have a fall of coarse thread lace sewn on. As wedding presents, the loveliest tea cloths of white satinette embroidered in gold, or of delicate colors, worked in shaded silks, are given; and there is also a Cretan silk muslin interspersed with tinsel threads which is greatly used for table cloths and slips.

The daintiest little teapot holders are to be seen made of wadded satin, brocade, or in the material of the cloth. They are circular, about five inches in diameter, edged with a cord and a concealed wire, so that they fold over and resemble in shape the division of an orange. Some of them are of soft silk, "smocked" in color.

A silver or old china bowl of roses or some other flowers, or a quaint basket filled with moss and ferns, is to be seen on many prettily arranged tea tables, for, now that five o'clock tea is such an institution—considerable thought is bestowed on it to render it attractive and, if possible, original.

Oak has a fascination for all artistic persons, and, of late, there has been a search for old kitchen dressers, on which to arrange the collections of china, delft, and pottery. Oak slabs for mantel-shelves with a carved border, carved oak chests for holding wood, and even coal, carved bedposts as the ends of tall screens, and any other article, the quainter the better, are pounced upon as prizes; but perhaps the greatest novelty are the wicker lobster pots, plain or gilded, set on carved stands or small tables, and filled with grasses or plants. These require space, as do the tall screens, which attain ten and twelve feet in height; or the gigantic lamp shades of painted cardboard, stiff and round, that have lately made their appearance.

Toothache, caused by a cold in the facial nerves, may often be relieved by wringing a soft towel out of cold water, and sprinkling it with strong vinegar. This should be laid on the face like a poultice, and will often be followed by a refreshing sleep.

Pulled Bread.—Take a freshly-baked loaf of bread, cut off all the crust; then, with a fork or the fingers, tear the other part of the bread into long thin strips. Lay these in a pan, and place in a moderate oven until dry through; then quicken the heat so as to color quickly. When a pale golden color, take from the pan, and serve cold with butter or cheese.

Potted Beef.—Slice thinly four pounds of lean raw beef, and beat the slices with a rolling-pin. Sprinkle over them about half a teaspoonful of powdered allspice, pepper and salt to taste, and add a pinch of cayenne. Leave the meat in a cold place with the spice on it, and turn it once or twice. Then place it in a jar, and add only just enough water to cook it. Tie some paper over the top of the jar. Cover with a tin or saucer, and cook it in a slow oven for ten hours.

Let the meat stand in the jar till cool, then pound it to a paste, using a little gravy in the process, and adding more seasoning if necessary. Place the meat in small jars, and run a little melted butter over it. This will keep for some time in a cool place, and when served may be cut in thin delicate slices with a very sharp knife.

Cold Potatoes Redressed.—Chop or slice cold boiled potatoes quite fine, place them in a baking-dish, strew butter and salt on them, and dredge a little flour on each layer. When full, pour milk over them, and bake in the oven to a nice brown.

German Stew.—Take one and one-half pounds of neck of mutton and put it into a pot with a tablespoonful of dripping; add two onions sliced, allowing them to fry gently; add a little water, cover the pot and stew slowly for an hour. Now wash a good firm cabbage; remove outside leaves, and divide it into eight pieces lengthwise; place it in water; peel six potatoes, and cut them in slices; place them also in the water. When the meat has stewed as above place the cabbage and potatoes round the meat; sprinkle over them a teaspoonful of salt and a half of pepper; replace the lid and stew for three-quarters of an hour, taking care it does not burn. The whole is cooked by steam, and is good and economical.

Here is an English receipt for lemon butter, said to be fine. The juice and grated rind of three lemons, three eggs well beaten, one pound of sugar, one small cup of water, one level teaspoonful of butter. Beat well together and boil five minutes until thick. Put in covered jelly glasses.

The Next Door.

BY M. E.

WHEN Mrs. Chatterton, a very pretty young widow, with one little boy, bought a small cottage at Bolton, and came there to reside, she thought it an earthly paradise; but Satan entered in paradise, and the very first day that little Roland Chatterton went out to play, a great dog jumped the hedge which divided his mother's garden from her neighbor's, and barked and growled most terribly at the small man in petticoats and red stockings, who at once flew to his mother with piteous wails and shrieks of terror.

Mrs. Chatterton caressed her child, placed him in safety in the middle of her bed, and rushed out into the garden, armed with a curtain pole, to expel the intruder.

He was there still, and had frightened the little servant, in a white cap, who was called Roland's nurse-maid, to such a degree that she had climbed a vine trellis, and clung to it half way up, crying piteously.

Meanwhile, a man of portly habit, and so well dressed that, but for his disgusting conduct, Mrs. Chatterton would have considered him a gentleman, stood on the other side of the hedge, laughing.

"All he wants to do is to lick your hand, young woman," this masculine individual was saying. "He's the best-tempered fellow. Come down and be friends with him."

"I can't, sir!" squealed the little maid. "I'm that afraid, I shall die, sir! I had a cousin died of hydryfoby, sir! O-o-h! Oh! He's a climbing up after me!"

Mrs. Chatterton, though mortally afraid of the dog herself, was determined not to quail before these insolent intruders. She advanced slowly.

"Call your dog away, sir," she said. "The brute has already nearly frightened my son into convulsions. Now he attacks my servants. No doubt I shall be the next victim. Call him off!"

"Here, Leo!" cried the gentleman.

Leo heard, and obeyed reluctantly.

"Come down, child," said Mrs. Chatterton. "It is most shocking that we should have this to bear. Is that your dog, sir?"

"That is my dearest friend Leo," replied the portly gentleman; "and allow me to tell you, madam, that he is worth any ten men, and all the women I have ever had the misfortune to meet. The young person is quite safe. Why doesn't she come down?"

Mrs. Chatterton, conscious that the dignity of the situation was not increased by the great exhibition of stocking which Sophy was making, repeated her commands. The maid descended and rushed into the house, uttering a wild shriek; and Mrs. Chatterton turned to the dog's master.

"Sir," she said, "as I cannot permit my only son's life to be perpetually in danger, I must request you never to allow that dog to enter my garden again."

"I'll request him not to do so," replied the gentleman. "He's partial to a bit of fun, though. He's like me in that. It is his sense of the ridiculous, I am sure, that brings him here. If you will climb trees when he appears, he may think it too good a joke to lose. He may insist on coming."

"A dog who would behave like that would prove himself mad," replied Mrs. Chatterton. "I am quite as averse to hydrophobia as Sophy is. I shall think it my duty to shoot him if he trespasses on my grounds again."

Mrs. Chatterton did not own a pistol, and could not have fired one if she had, but the threat enraged the stout gentleman.

"Perhaps you would like to shoot me also?" he said. "Observe, madam, I am on my own grounds, not on yours. I have my opinion of any one who can take a dislike to a noble animal like that, who can repulse his offers of affection. I begin to doubt the creature's sagacity. Generally he makes no mistakes. Why he should make advances to a cowardly little milksop of a boy and a driveling idiot of a maid-servant I am sure I can't guess. Come, Leo. Madam, I advise you to take your family to Dr. Pasteur as soon as possible. Good-morning."

"The insolent wretch!" gasped Mrs. Chatterton.

"Oh! ain't he, mum?" gasped Sophy, at the door.

"I'd a mind to souse him with b'iling water!" called cook, from the kitchen window. "Oh! but he's the fiend, that's what he is—bad luck to him!"

The individual thus described was not yet too far away to overhear, and he grinned sardonically.

People said of Mr. Sutphen that he had been jilted in his youth, and had hated women ever since. Certainly they were right about the women. He could see no good in any of them, and when they offended him he behaved most horribly, as in this present instance.

And this was a nice beginning for two neighbors; especially for Mrs. Chatterton, who had never before been treated with any discourtesy, and who was used to look upon men as her natural protectors and admirers.

It gave her a new sensation, and a most unpleasant one, to be addressed in that fashion, to be looked at as Mrs. Sutphen had looked at her.

Then he had called her son, her baby yet in petticoats, a cowardly milk-sop! Considering the exhibition of stockings she did not feel much sympathy for Sophy; still he had behaved like a brute to the girl.

She longed to punish him, and she could not see her way to it. However, she had a gate opened into the other road, that she might not always be obliged to pass his windows in going out. From this time the widow and the bachelor lived in a state of warfare only possible to country neighbors. There was always a cow or a chicken, a goose or a turkey to quarrel over.

The bachelor had his washing and ironing done at home by his servant who tied his clothes-line to the branch of an old tree which grew on Mrs. Chatterton's side of the dividing hedge.

Mrs. Chatterton waited until all the shirts and stockings were hung up, and then bade Sophy untie the rope.

Sophy cut it, and all the garments lay upon the ground. Mr. Sutphen consulted a lawyer, and Mrs. Chatterton had a bill for "clothes line, and damage to garments" presented to her, which she paid.

It was only one of a thousand annoyances, and this went on for a full year at least; everybody in the village knew about it, and everybody blamed the old bachelor; but, curiously enough, a great attachment had sprung up between the original cause of the quarrel—the great Newfoundland dog, Prince Leo, and the widow's little boy, Roland, who had now got into knickerbockers, and had his long curls cut.

The heads of the opposing armies should have interfered, but they did not. They pretended not to know anything about it.

There was a deep pond, almost a lake, hard by the little cluster of cottages of which Mrs. Chatterton's was one, and Roland had been forbidden to go near it alone.

Alas! when his hair was cropped and his skirts put away the baby vanished for ever. Roly became a boy. And he not only went to the lake alone, but went there to paddle about in the water. One day he was missed.

Sophy had lingered at her glass awhile in view of the arrival of the young butcher. A great terror seized upon the mother. She flew towards the pond.

As he saw her coming, naughty Roland ran further into the water and lost his footing. He was drowning—drowning before her eyes. She could not swim, but rushed in after him, shrieking loudly.

Instantly a man rushed across the sand. A dog passed him, and flew into the water.

Mr. Sutphen was the man, Prince Leo the dog. The former brought out the lady, the latter the little boy.

But for their promptitude both would have been drowned, and as soon as Mrs. Chatterton felt sure they were not, she knelt down at Leo's side and kissed him on his good brown nose.

"You dear thing, I love you," said she; "and you, sir, my eternal gratitude is yours."

After this peace reigned between the cottagers. Offerings of roses from the gentleman, and of custards from the lady, brought on calls and tea-drinkings—of course, at Mrs. Chatterton's house. And one day, while they sat opposite each other, with Roly between them, and Prince Leo at his master's feet, Mr. Sutphen remarked,—

"This is very nice. I should like to be so always."

Mrs. Chatterton blushed.

"Should you?" he asked. "I'll be very good to Roland. I love him dearly."

"And I'll be very good to Prince Leo," she said, "and—and to you."

So it was settled.

Little Tim.

BY M. G. L.

OLD Aunt Jane sat beside her apple-stall all day thinking of poor sick Barney at home, and hoping little Anne, the daughter of the laundress in the next room, would not forget to see to him a little.

At dusk she hastened home to don her best, happy if she had money enough for the "sup of tay," the medicine, and the bit to lay over for "the rint."

Aunt Jane was kind to everybody, but kindest of all to little Tim Barron—Lame Tim, the shoeblack, who had his box in the doorway not far off. Her interest in him began on the day when a big ruffian stole his stock-in-trade, broke his crutch, and beat him with the pieces, and left him bleeding in the alley-way.

Aunt Jane had her hands full with Barney and the rent, but she helped the little orphan home to her room, nursed him well, and set him up in his business again close to her stall, where many a rosy apple fell to his share, and, what the boy was more thankful for still, many a kind word, such as a mother might have given to her child.

It was Aunt Jane, too, who interviewed old Mr. Raleigh, the philanthropist, and a trustee of a certain great charity, and got Tim taken into a great school, where boys were trained at once for scholars and farmers.

So Tim went away, and Jane kept her stall as before, and had the usual up and down luck, until one bitter winter everything seemed to turn fairly against her.

Poor old Barney died, and his funeral was a great expense. "The bits of things" were sold, and Jane went to lodge with little Anne's mother, but her heart was heavy. And she made mistakes, and was robbed and cheated of apples and sweets.

And at last, one Saturday night, when she had what she called the "week's makings" in her pocket, a strange young man, well-dressed, bought a dozen oranges, and gave her a big coin to change.

She gave him every penny in her pocket, besides the oranges, and discovered an hour after that the money was counterfeit. It was a rainy night, and, overheated by excitement, she caught a heavy cold and fell into pneumonia.

Anne's mother was a close woman, and poor besides. She could not afford to keep a lodger who could not pay for the last week's rent, and was to be ill the coming one. She sent Jane to the hospital.

That was the end of all the poor soul's independence—the one thing she had prided herself on. She had not a friend who could help her; and so, after such a struggle with starvation as people seldom come out of alive, she was considered lucky in being sent to the workhouse.

All this was slow in coming about, and it was just ten years from the day on which she had bought Little Lame Tim his new blacking box, that, bowed with shame, she took her place amongst paupers—she who had been so industrious and so proud.

Hot tears fell over the wrinkled face; she was very miserable. Many about her, who had beggars' souls, and only repined because workhouse fare was hard, could not comprehend her trouble: but one pious old woman, trying to help her, whispered, "that Sunday was always a comfort; that there was preaching and hymns; and the parson told them those who were poor went to Heaven as fast as the rich. Sunday come, you'll cheer up a bit," said he.

But old Jane could not forget how, poor as she had been, she had always gone to church on Sunday in a clean dress and tidy hat, and had never failed to put her mite into the contribution plate.

"I doubt there's a dale of comfort in pauper preaching," she said.

But Sunday came. Old Jane's "first pauper Sunday," as she said to herself. There was some extra dish for breakfast. The chapel bell clanged and jangled under the uncertain touch of an old pauper, and the old people, the cripples, the half-witted folk, made their way in doleful procession, along the dusty path of the bare grounds to the door of the place of worship.

They stumbled into their seats, some of the old women noticing that the matron had a new bonnet; others moving mechanically, and heeding nothing. But soon a whisper came down the bench where Jane sat—

"It's not our own minister. No, it's a new preacher—a young thing—just a bit of a boy." And dissatisfaction was expressed as a pale, slender young man, with a sweet face, and just a little limp in his gait, stepped into the pulpit and said: "Let us pray."

The prayer was brief and earnest, and the tones of his voice mollified all the old women at once; and then the hymn was sung, by all the poor, cracked, wavering voices; and then the young man began to talk to them in a tender, kindly sort of way, as he might to his own old grandparents if they had been in sorrow.

"Young folks is mostly so stuck up. He isn't," said Jane's neighbor.

"I've seen the face before," thought Jane. "Where was it? I've heard the voice, and I still don't know where."

He was speaking of the trials of the poor now. And as she listened she felt that he knew by experience what they really were.

She listened, and forgot her surroundings; forgot that she was a pauper; remembered only that Heaven was for all. And suddenly she heard the preacher say these words:

"Oh, I know how hard it is. I know. I know. Do you think I was born a rich man's son? No, friends; I was left in the great and wicked city a poor little orphan. I earned my bread by blacking boots. I was very lame then, and walked with a crutch, and I was not able to read.

"One day, a big boy beat and robbed me of my stock in trade. I was very ill after that, and I do not know what would have become of me but for a dear old woman—an old woman who earned her bread by sitting at a stall all day. She became my patron, she nursed me, she started me afresh in my boot-blacking, she helped me home, she cared for me as if I had been her child. Through her influence a rich gentleman was brought to notice me, and send me to school. That I have prospered, that I am no longer so sad a cripple, that I have an education, is all due to that poor apple woman.

"I pray for her every night. I think of her as those who have known their mothers think of them; and I know now better than I did as a child, how much all that she did was for her to do, with her tiny earnings and a bed-ridden husband to care for.

"Ah, friends, when I speak of the trials of the poor I speak from experience; when I speak of the goodness and charity there is amongst them it is because I have experienced that also."

As he spoke on, the Order of Poverty seemed to become a crown, and not a cross.

His listeners looked more kindly at each other, lovingly at him. As for old Jane, she trembled from head to foot, for she knew this minister was he who had once been Little Lame Tim, the shoeback.

As the procession filed out of the chapel again, she made her courtesy to the matron.

"May I speak to the gintleman that preached to us, ma'am?" she said. "He knowed me once."

And permission being given, she lingered near the door until he passed through it, and gently touching his arm, said:—

"Sir, you wouldn't be remembering me after all these years, but I'm——"

But here the young preacher interrupted her.

"You're Aunt Jane!" he said, and took both her hands and kissed her on the forehead. "Aunt Jane! Thank Heaven, I have found you!"

It was poor old Jane's last pauper day. In a happy country home she now presides over a little parsonage, housekeeper to the clergyman, tenderly cared for as though she were of his own kin.

"I wonder you're not ashamed of me!" she says sometimes, "a poor, unlarnt old woman."

But the clergyman answers:

"You were not ashamed of me, Aunt Jane, when I was Little Lame Tim the shoeblack."

LADY VISITOR: "Well, Maisie, I have come after that new baby. You told me last week that you didn't want it, and that I could take it home." Maisie: "Well, you can't have it—I want it myself now; but I'll get you a piece of paper and you can cut a pattern."

Humorous.

AN ESCAPE.

With scorn that was perceptible, she was,
she said, quite sceptical of youths who
were susceptible to every girl they met.
At first to be invincible was better as a prin-
ciple; for hearts so soon convincible
would easily forget.

The question of proximity was one of una-
nimity—should wait for love's ultimity.
To sit too close was wrong.
To kiss was indefensible; 'twas very repre-
hensible—to her incomprehensible—she
said in accents strong.

And then in half rigidity he bowed with
grim stolidity, and skipped with some
rapidity. Alone, her soul was stirred.
Her eyes assumed liquidity. To think of his
timidity! That he, with such stupidity,
should take her at her word!

What is the difference between a goose and a defeated adversary? One gives down and the other gives up.

"I would send you a kiss, papa," wrote little Lucy, who was away on a visit, "but I have been eating onions."

As the course of true love never runs smooth, it is supposed that there will always be plenty of friction matches in the world.

It has been said that a countryman between two lawyers is like a fish between two cats: he is sure to be devoured, but it is uncertain which will have him.

A wit, once entering a committee-room and finding every seat occupied, said, "Will any one move that I may take the chair?"

Teacher of political economy: Mention an infant industry.

Lively young student: Sitting still and sucking one's thumb.

An Eastern editor says: "Our women are accused of being fond of whistling. Well, so be it. What is more lovely than tulips well blown?"

She: I know I'm cross at times, John; but, if I had my life to live over again, I should marry you just the same.

He: I have my doubts about that, my dear.

He: I envy the man who sang the tenor solo.

She: Why, I thought he had a very poor voice!

He: So did I. But just think of his nerve!

Mistress: Mary, how was it I saw you treating your friends to my cake and fruit?

Mary: I can't tell, ma'am, for the loife of me, for I'm shure I covered the keyhole!

She: I hope you can come next Thursday. We're having some music, and a supper after.

He: Oh, yes, I'll come; but—er—I may be late!

"Patrick, you told me you needed the alcohol to clean the mirrors with, and here I find you drinking it."

"Faix, mum, it's a drinking it an' brathin' on the glass of it in a doin'."

"My dear boy," said a fond father to his son, "never neglect your work. Work acts like medicine."

"Then," exclaimed the son, who had been dosed with drugs, "I don't want any of it; I hate medicine!"

Light houses, from a theatrical point of view, always indicate breakers ahead.

"Now that I have got my hay in," said the relieved farmer, "I think the world would be greatly better for a good shower."

"I wonder," said a young lady, "why Hymen is always represented as carrying a torch?" To which an old bachelor sneeringly responded: "To indicate that he always makes it warm for people who marry."

Friend: Well, Ethel, how do you like married life?

Ethel, enthusiastically: It's simply delightful. We've been married a week, and have had eight quarrels, and I got the best of it every time.

"What did her father say when you told him that you wanted to marry his daughter, Rivers?"

"Well, Banks, he didn't absolutely refuse, but he imposed a very serious condition."

"What was it?"

"He said he would see me hanged first."

Seeker: I observe that Professor Stagg has been lecturing on "How to become a Christian Athlete." I wonder what that means?

Sageman: That's an easy one. A Christian athlete is one who is continually jumping from one religion to another.

"Do you believe in a third party?" asked old Dimmick, referring to the political situation, of his daughter's beau, as all three sat in the parlor.

"Well," replied the young man, who had not called to discuss politics, "I wouldn't have thought of asking you to retire; but since you mention it, Mr. Dimmick, I will say that it is the general belief that two are company."

MARRIAGE SUPERSTITIONS.

All nations have added their quantum of superstition to the institution of marriage. That this particular event in man's life should be thus favored above the rest may be accounted for by its immense importance, and by the fact that all other events in the life of man are more or less connected with it.

In the middle ages it was firmly believed in places that there were lucky and unlucky days for a wedding. He who married on Wednesday ran the risk of being deceived by his wife; while he who married on Friday would be certain to die a poor man. A journal of Paris actually published the dates of these unlucky days, which were forty-two in number.

Many old country folk will to this day tell you that when two betrothed give each other their hands before the altar, the one whose hand is the coldest will die first, especially if that same one should be the first to fall asleep on the bridal night.

Another curious belief is that which has often been heard expressed at weddings: "Ah! the bride shall weep, for the rain doth fall."

In the Vosges it is still believed that when two marriages take place on the same day, and in the same church, the bride who first steps out of the church porch will have a boy for her first-born child.

So strong does that belief exist that it gives rise to terrible quarrels, and even fights—the friends of the respective parties doing all in their power to aid their own bride to leave the church first, to the detriment of the other.

Only a few years ago, a mayor of a certain village in the Vosges had the following luminous idea, and thus prevented a most serious riot on the occasion of a double marriage. He offered his two hands to the rival brides, and thus triumphantly led them out of the church door at the same moment.

If, while going to church, the bridal party should meet a funeral, it is supposed that, according to the sex of the dead, either the bride or her husband will die first. Should two persons of the same family intermarry with two members of another family, one of the four is certain to die within the year.

In Brittany, if the contracting persons would not have their children born mutes, they must fast during the ceremony; while in the province of Arragon a couple become man and wife by simply drinking together from the same glass. In another province, the newly-wedded pair must be struck smartly between the shoulders to preserve them from the Evil Eye; or, again, with the same idea, some ornament of their dress is stolen from them the moment after the nuptial blessing has been given.

Another manner of securing the happiness of the bride was to cause her to pass over naked swords arranged in the form of a cross, and called the Cross of St. Andrew.

In the province of Arragon, in order to insure a large family, the bride, on entering her house for the first time, was bound either to break an egg by kicking it, or to have some wheat thrown over her.

These are but a few of the superstitions still believed in some sections of Europe.

SAILORS EASILY PLEASED.—"Daredevil chaps as some of them are when ashore, I don't know a more simple, boyish set of beings than sailors when right out at sea.

"To watch them when they're sitting together taking their ease on deck," continued the naval officer who was speaking, "you would imagine them to be the most harmless, innocent creatures outside a nursery. Events of the day being usually far from stirring, they resort to all manner of youthful devices for killing time.

"I've seen three or four men playing 'noughts and crosses' for hours together with a piece of chalk and board. All sorts of puzzles bought when ashore are popular, and, a dogged sort of fellow, Jack will keep pegging away to solve the mystery for any length of time. Not infrequently, however, the puzzle gets into the hands of some impetuous sailor, who, in a fit of desperation, slings it far out into the sea.

"Reading of course, many of them are fond of, and books with pictures are popular. Guide-books well illustrated, are especially appreciated. Pointing out the sights he has visited, Jack, on a lazy afternoon, lives his last 'leave' over again.

"In one of my ships a book of riddles was in everyday use. Half-a-dozen men would sit round the reader, who, beginning at the first query, would ask: 'Why is a so-and-so something-or-other?' Then there would be a pause, and each man would say, 'I give it up' in turn. The answer was then read out, pipes removed while the listeners observed, 'Of course,' and so on to the next conundrum.

"Coming upon such a little group I, one afternoon, asked the nonsense riddle, 'Why is an oven when it's hot?' The men pondered and gave it up. The 'answer,' you know, is, 'Because the more you rub it the faster.' I told them this, and you never saw a more puzzled-looking lot in your life. I left them scratching their heads, and saying, 'Well, I can't understand that!'"

TO SUPERSEDE TOBACCO.—Many and various are the substitutes that have been proposed for the "Indian weed." Of course, the employment of such plants as the potato, beet, cabbage and turnip, for purposes of adulteration, is well known. Many substitutes, however, for which even patents have been taken out, do not pretend to counterfeit tobacco.

For example, one inventor has secured exclusive rights in the idea of making cigars with fillers of pine needles. The needles are to be gathered when they are green and "full of tarry matter." A wrapper of moist tobacco leaf is put round them, and the "cigar" when dry is guaranteed not only to burn readily, but to be a perfect cure for throat and lung troubles.

Another patent is for cigars of sunflower leaves, which are to be cut off when the seed ripens. The use of a tobacco wrapper in this case is allowed to persons long accustomed to that weed.

A woman has taken out a patent for cigars of eucalyptus leaves. She says that they, "unlike tobacco, leave a clean and pleasant flavor in the mouth." Furthermore, she claims priority in the notion of employing them for the pipe, for snuff, as tooth powder, and with suitable fats in the manufacture of soap and candles.

Another inventor proposes to use the leaves of Indian corn, prepared like tobacco, for chewing and smoking. The stalks of corn are to be boiled in water to a syrup, to which is added quassia, or capsicum, or "other bitter botanic product." The leaves, having been dried in the sun, are to be dipped in this syrup before making them ready for use.

And yet, in spite of all this ingenuity, the tobacco trade has not shown any signs of decrease.

BLIND MEN ON WHEELS.—"Not many persons, I fancy, are aware that blind people are able to cycle," said a bicycle manufacturer. "I know of several blind persons, however, who, since the craze set in, have taken lessons and learned to ride—surprisingly well, too. But it's less astonishing than you might think, remembering how acute the other senses of the blind become, and that many ordinary cyclists can ride blindfolded for short distances.

"We have built seven machines for blind customers this year, constructing them specially low, for easier mounting. I know a blind gentleman who travels for a provincial cycle firm, and rides a tandem. He is accompanied by a friend who can see, but quite often he rides on the front seat, and steers himself by his friend's instructions.

"Another blind gentleman, a customer of mine, thinks nothing of a thirty miles' run. I have a lady customer too, who, though quite blind, rides extremely gracefully. She can tell the moment she is off the road, and has never had a serious accident.

"There is also, engaged at one of the cycling schools, a very clever 'trick rider' who is totally blind.

"A blind person has great advantages over ordinary cyclists on a pitchy dark night. I was out on a country road one black night with a cycling gentleman who was born blind.

"The oil running short, our lamps went out, but that, though it bothered me, made no difference to him; he could remember every turning, and the number of pedal-strokes between each, and he was of great assistance in finding the way home."

A SENSIBLE YOUNG WIFE.—"How do you like my cooking? Come, now, give me your honest opinion. How does it compare with your mother's?"

"If you want my honest opinion, I will say your cooking is very fair, but it is not quite equal to mother's."

"I did not expect it would be quite equal to your mother's, but I wish you to remember that your mother had many years experience before you were capable of forming a judgment of her cooking."

"By Jove, you are right, I never would have thought of that, though I assure you I would have made no comments on your cooking if you had not asked for my honest opinion. The point you have made is a good one, but it is entirely overlooked by young married men."

"It is, and, unfortunately, it is not thought of by young wives. The idea of any man saying to a girl just a year or two out of school, 'You can't cook as well as mother;' or 'You don't manage as well as mother,' and never taking into consideration that mother has had an experience of forty or fifty years! Suppose the young wife should turn round and retort, 'You're not half as skilful a workman as my father?'"

"And I wonder she doesn't. It's a poor rule that won't work both ways."

And so it is, when you come to think of it.

KNOWLEDGE WORTH HAVING.—The knowledge which we crave and work for, which we look and find, which we think or dig out for ourselves, which we rejoice in as a newly-found treasure—that is the knowledge, be it small or great, that is worth having. It is like the food for which we hunger—it gives us fresh power and fuller life. It matters far less even what this knowledge is than the way in which it was gained. The most systematic and well-prepared course of study worried through by a student whose only care is that he may get his diploma is of far less value to him or to the world than the vital thought of the young mechanic, who, anxious to master the secrets of his trade, patiently studies its details, discovers its principles, and infuses into it his own fresh and living force, perhaps in the form of some new invention, or perhaps in a more skilful touch or more delicate finish than it has yet received.

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No. 1. The round of the head.
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No. 4. Over the crown of the head.

FOR WIGS, INCHES.

No. 1. The round of the head.
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MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER,
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov. 29, '88. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

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